FASCISM

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BY ODON POR

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NEW YORK
ALFRED · A · KNOPF
1923

Made and printed in Great Britain by
UNWIN BROTHERS, LIMITED, THE GRESHAM PRESS, LONDON AND WOKING

DEDICATED TO

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

It has been very difficult to find a precise equivalent for certain words which occur constantly in this book. I add these notes lest the translation should be misleading.

Sindacato usually signifies Trade Union, and has been so translated, but the Italian word is wider and more general than the English, and is often used for an association of capitalists, either a professional association or what we should call a syndicate. *Sindacalismo* has the same ambiguity, but I have nearly always translated it as "the Trade Union Movement."

Categoria.—This word seems so loosely used in dealing with the Italian Labour Movement that I have thought it best to translate it literally. You can say, for instance, in Italian, "the various categories in the metal industry" (blacksmith or mechanic), and here the word means "craft"; but you can also say "the various categories of citizens," and here it may mean either class or profession; and yet there are cases where it is contrasted with *class* as a criterion of classification. In these latter cases *trade* would perhaps be the nearest equivalent.

Corporazione may be applied to any corporate body, but it has, at present, a special meaning, as will appear in Chapter VIII and in Appendix I, and I have used the English word Corporation only in this special sense.

Mezzadria, the system of peasants working for half the produce, the other half going to the tenant or landowner, who pays the taxes and supplies the working capital.

Reggenza.—Throughout Appendix I, I have translated this word "Province" for lack of a precise equivalent. D'Annunzio wishes to emphasize the fact that Carnaro, though not yet actually a part of Italy, was to be held for Italy until annexation should become feasible. Perhaps "Dominion" might have given the meaning, but it seemed safer to use a non-committal word.

Senate, the Assembly so-called in the translation of Appendix I is called in the original "*the Council of Best Men,*" in allusion to the Latin Assembly so-called.

Magistrates in the translation stands for "*Good Men.*"

Unitarian.—After the split in the Italian Socialist body, when Turati and his followers—a large minority—were ejected by the Extremists, this minority called themselves Unitarian Socialists," not of course in allusion to any religious creed, but to their united front.

CONTENTS

FASCISM

CHAPTER I

BOLSHEVISM AND FASCISM

THOSE who describe Fascism as a Prætorian Guard armed in defence of industrial capitalists and big landowners see only one side of this movement, which has now come into power and is entrenching itself in the position it has gained. These people spread the idea that it has been and is nothing but a white guard in the service of bourgeois reaction and, by so doing, think that they will conciliate the proletariate of Italy and admonish that of other countries ; but, as a matter of fact, what they are doing is to teach those who are ready to profit by the teaching how to organize opposition to Labour. Their description of the exploits of the Fascisti becomes a code of rules for methods of attack, while it supplies to the proletariate no means of defence.

Just as the one-sided presentment of the Russian Revolution and the attempts to transplant it bodily into other countries has disoriented the Labour Movement all over the world and hindered its logical development, so this one-sided presentment of Fascism may produce infinite disaster. In the

one case the working class has been led astray, in the other, it would be the, so-called, "ruling class."

Movements so vast as the Russian Revolution and Fascism, even if confined within the limits of a single State, may, undoubtedly, enrich world-wide experience and thus exert an influence on the course of development elsewhere, provided that they are carefully examined and analysed and that their form is not mistaken for their substance. In other words, the quintessence of any newly gained national experience may be of use in another country by throwing light on what is actually taking place in that country, while any attempt to impose any form of events without due regard as to the existence of a suitable indigenous basis to support them, may serve only to disturb those processes of development which are conditioned by all sorts of special circumstances and to provoke confusion and disaster which might otherwise have been avoided.

The Fascisti are the first to deny that they represent simply and solely reaction against Labour or against Socialism; they therefore decline all kinship and alliance with the white guards which flourish in other countries and make bold to call themselves "Fascisti."

There was, it was true, a phase in the movement which in many ways resembled a white reaction, when the strongholds of the Labour Movement were attacked and destroyed, and many of its supporters silenced and paralysed. It will be many years before the hatred and suspicion created during that period of systematic violence can be cancelled.

But the origin of Fascism and its present orientation indicate that it has no desire to oppose Labour, but aims first at reconciling Labour with the Nation, and, secondly, at creating a national spirit of citizenship with Labour for its basis. The word Fascism has unfortunate associations[1] in the mind of the public. It has come to be identified with that aspect of the new movement—at once the most striking and the most offensive—the organized attack on Labour. It is much the same with the word Bolshevism which has become identified with that violent and destructive attack on the bourgeoisie, which was the most salient characteristic of the first period of Bolshevic rule. Many years must elapse before the term Bolshevism will be able to shake off its original implication and come to mean instead—a new method of government which aims at bringing the various institutions and organs of production, both private and public, to work together in unison for the public welfare.

Meanwhile, Fascism is beginning to be too narrow a title, and is shaking off its initial meaning, not only because it covers already a formidable Labour Movement with numerous Trade Unions, Co-operatives, and Guilds, but chiefly because it tends to become a new method of social action and of Government control over the economic life of the country, in the public interest.

For ends which are practically identical, there has been in Russia violent suppression of the

[1] The term "fascist' comes from the Latin "fasces," signifying a bundle of rods enclosing an axe, borne by lictors as a symbol of power before consuls and other magistrates.

bourgeoisie and, in Italy, of the organized proletariate. Violence in Russia aimed at the annihilation of the bourgeoisie, and no sooner were they at the point of extinction than it was found that they had to be resuscitated, because the powers which they alone possessed, and the functions they alone could fulfil, were absolutely necessary for the State and the material needs of the country. In Italy we find the process reversed; the Labour Movement and its institutions almost destroyed, its leaders paralysed, where their leadership is not entirely suppressed, but, at the eleventh hour, the whole thing brought to life again because it becomes absolutely clear that, without organized labour, any attempt at social construction would be useless.

Both processes culminate and declare themselves in a dictatorship. The initial impulse towards class abolition and the suppression of class interests merges into the recognition of the value of those functions hitherto associated with class. No sooner is the first blind passionate impulse modified, than reason begins to see that classes and institutions cannot be done away with at a single blow without inflicting a mortal wound on Society, and that their overthrow is not necessary for the public safety, but only their control and the co-ordination of their functions.

Experience cannot fail to show, more or less clearly, that some kind of new system of economics and politics must emerge from such co-ordination; that no other result is possible. Thus in Russia, under State control, private property is being re-established and private management of agriculture

and industry wherever such management seems indispensable to the existence of the State and Society; while in Italy, organized labour is being recalled to the position which had been gained for it by its own efficiency. These are the two extreme instances of those strange throes in world history which characterize our epoch.

Lenin has said that to work out the new regime in Russia will need a century of arduous toil. Mussolini affirms that the Revolution initiated by the coming into power of the Fascisti "will go on developing during all the rest of the century, but with no anti-Labour bias."[1]

It is noteworthy that these two leaders of movements, apparently antagonistic, should each of them feel so certain that the impulse which he represents will take many years to reach its full development and will, in the end, alter the course of history.

Such words seem to imply that the movements in question are not merely concerned with party politics or the realization of a highly elaborated Utopia, but that they concern those forces that form the life of a people; forces that, after many changing phases, become firmly incorporated in the social order.

Many people will be scandalized by this parallel between Russian Bolshevism and Italian Fascism. Just as orthodox revolutionaries see in Fascism a purely conservative force, so do plutocrats see in Bolshevism one that is purely destructive. But the processes of history do not develop according to theoretical formulæ nor lend themselves to be

[1] Speech to the workmen at the "Stabilimento Polygraphico" of the War Ministry, January 21, 1923.

neatly catalogued under a single heading; they proceed along the track which is laid down for them by economic factors. They may leave the line owing to some impediment, but, if they are to advance, they must inevitably return to it. The march of history in our day is along a track characterized by a combination of various methods of economic activity; its destination is that state of things in which the various economic agents will act together in unison for the public benefit.

In other words, the most varied types of property and of productive organization must be recognized, but they must be framed and incorporated in a State, functioning effectively in the collective interest, and they must be required to work together harmoniously. The precise form of this State, when it does become established, will be fixed, no doubt, by tradition, in the sense that it will reflect the tendencies institutional, mental, and temperamental of the respective countries.

And it is the work of the dictator—or shall we say for people with weak nerves—the statesman to further this process of development and help to mould and guide the new State, and he must not renounce his attitude of dictatorship until it has taken shape in institutions capable of giving permanence to the work that has been initiated.

This is of primary importance; all the rest is secondary.

Many who were scandalized by the events of the Russian Revolution have come to see now that nothing could take the place of the Bolshevic regime in Russia, that no Government, pursuing other methods, could hold its own there, and many

who were hostile to Bolshevism are now willing to collaborate with it. The fate of Fascism will probably be the same. As the dictatorship becomes better understood it will be also better received by the people.

There is nothing to show that the Russian Bolshevics had any settled plan of forsaking pure Communism. When they decreed Communism they thought it would work smoothly. Later a change of policy was necessitated by the fact that Communism was unable to support the whole Russian population. The new policy was definitely adopted and systematized when the Bolshevics realized the facts of the situation and saw that they were unalterable.

Even before the appearance of Fascism those of the Italian proletariate who opposed the attempts of the Bolshevics in Italy had already learnt a lesson from the experience of Russian Communism and had no wish to imitate it, but there are still very few signs here of any definite idea as to the right economic policy for the future—the policy of recognizing a variety of methods of production working together for communal ends.

It is already admitted here that the State should in reality, and not merely in theory, represent the public and should in return have a right to the services of every citizen. But the chief problem has never yet been solved as to how these new relations of service between citizens and the State are to be organized for the public welfare.

When one movement sets itself to supersede another it will seek instinctively a new method of solving the same problem. Fascism sees itself

heir to the problems that have given rise to Socialism and that Socialism has failed to solve; but it does not yet know how to deal with the inheritance.

Still Mussolini feels that the process which is going on in Russia has a connection more intimate and complex than that of mere reaction with the process which is going on in Italy. This can be gathered from an article of his in which he affirms that the present situation in Italy might be dealt with either by the Russian method or by the Latin. The following quotation is from an article of his, published two months after Fascism came into power. It is a document characteristic of the attitude of the Fascisti.

"The Fascist Revolution has already reached its second period. The first was spent in substituting the new forces for the old in the State machine, a proceeding that was bound to be sudden and violent. The former manipulators of the machine seem a long way off now in time, if not in space. Everyone sees that the epoch of such men as Giolitti, Nitti, Bonomi, Salandra, and Orlando and the lesser gods of the parliamentary Olympus is at an end. Between October and November there was a mighty winding-up of the whole concern—men, methods, and policy.

"All that has now passed away into the region of the irrevocable. The cards are no longer on the table. They have had their day: no one will try to use them again. There are now new men running the machine, but the machine itself is all to pieces. Two months have been amply enough to convince one of this. The amount

of work in arrears is enormous. The men who were in power—creatures and victims of the quickly changing parliamentary situation—rapid and banal as a cinematograph—had neither time nor will to do anything. Their period in office was not a Government, but a mere passage. They did not solve any problems, they merely postponed them. They never accepted personal and direct responsibility: they spread it over an infinite number of subordinates. The bureaucracy, as executive, being the sole representative of permanence and stability amid continual changes, became arbitary. You cannot have a policy without time to elaborate it, to bring it to completion so that you may feel responsible for it. Under the old regime, ministers never had time for this. They neglected the State machine because they never felt sure of arriving at any conclusion or achieving any aim. In dealing with this situation there was a choice of two methods, the Russian and the Latin. The Revolution of Moscow, having first got rid of the people who were in the way, by putting them to death, fell on the machine and smashed it to atoms. The pendulum swung to the other extreme; now it has begun to swing back. The Fascist Revolution is not demolishing entirely, and at a single stroke that delicate and complex machine—the administration of a great State—it is proceeding step by step, a bit at a time. So it happens that Moscow has to retrace its steps while Rome goes steadily on from its point of departure. The Fascist Revolution may take for its motto *nulla dies sine linea.* This safe and logical method of advance alarms the adversaries of Fascism far more than

would the other. It gives no opportunity for the accusation of 'extreme measures' against the new Government. The Moscow method suggests a leap into the future with a broken neck as the result; the Roman, an orderly march of well-drilled troops. Moscow is embarrassed by difficulties of its own making, Rome is free to develop. Undoubtedly, however, this second period of our revolution is one of extraordinary difficulty and of extraordinary importance. It will decide the destiny of the revolution. The course to be followed lies between the timidity that dreads any innovation and the rashness that would fain wipe out the past altogether, a thing which is impossible.

"In a word, the tremors of old age and the impatience of youth. It is the task of this second period to bring the old into harmony with the new: all that is strong and sacred in the past, all that is strong and sacred still hidden in the womb of the future."[1]

Once in power, the Fascisti were anxious to put a stop to all violence against public bodies that had opposed them, and against Labour leaders and institutions. The Government issued again and again the strictest orders and proclamations all over the country and even to their own followers, and took severe measures against their own troops when necessary.

But just as the violence let loose by the world war did not come to an end with the armistice and the so-called Peace of Versailles, so this other consequence of the war, the contest between Fascism and those whom the Fascists believed to

[1] *Gerarchia*, January 1, 1923.

be the enemies of the Nation, could not be ended at a stroke. Systematic violence, definitely levelled against certain persons and institutions, has, indeed, ceased, but it still lurks here and there and bursts out sporadically.

Violence is a virulent poison in the body of Society and requires a powerful antidote to drive it out, but even so, the antidote works slowly. Appeals and threats are of little use: the vicious circle of hate and vendetta must be broken by a renewal of the whole social organism. A new cycle of history must be begun, in which violence will be no longer the deciding factor. And this is not the work of a day.

Fascist violence, officially organized, is now employed only to separate those bodies of people who are opposed to the Government and to force them to recognize it, and even in these cases the Government does not actually put a stop to their activity, but puts difficulties in the way of it in the hope of achieving better relations with them.

The aim of the Fascisti is to control and absorb all parties and all movements, including their own, and to incorporate them all in a State whose sole purpose is the welfare of the whole community.

One of the most far-seeing leaders of the Fascisti writes as follows on the subject: "Since the Fascist Revolution parties have ceased to exist, nor will they come to life again for a long time. Little by little, as the State becomes stronger and better organized, and as Fascism is diffused, without any violent transition, through every nerve of the State, by a gradual process of absorption,

parties, old and new, vanish altogether. Even our own party, Fascism itself, must disappear so as to complete entirely the process of absorption. It is a wonderful work, a mighty task, this which the Fascisti are called upon to undertake with unfaltering steadfastness. Our party must disappear by being merged in the State. The work before us is neither short nor easy. It demands from all a discipline and firmness of an even higher kind than that military discipline which was the secret of our victorious revolution.

"In this great work we must be, all of us, humble and silent co-operators, firm and faithful in defence: The dogma of the rights of man was consecrated by the Liberal Revolution. But that religion has become idolatry. We are returning to-day to the tradition of principle, Roman and severe. Higher than the right of man stands the right of the life of the State. And the right of the Nation over the individual. It is no backsliding, but a still greater conquest—this of the Fascist Revolution."[1]

Finzi, again, Under-Secretary for the Interior, is reported to have said[2]: "Now that we are in power, we are no longer Fascisti, but executors of the law."

This insistence on the absorption of all parties in the State tallies with the determination that power shall not be used for the benefit of any class, bourgeois or proletariate, because Fascism recognizes that such classification has no longer

[1] Dino Grandi, *Popolo d'Italia*, January 12, 1923.

[2] In an interview with the Rome correspondent of the *Observer*, January 12, 1923.

any correspondence with reality nor with the needs of the State.

The old categories have indeed, of late, become divided into a variety of new ones, in such wise that they can no longer be characterized by a terminology of class, but only by one of function. For instance, the plutocracy is beginning to develop out of the bourgeoisie and to become distinct from it, while from the proletariate, various categories are emerging which, through their relative material independence, occupy entirely new positions and establish new relations with other classes that are no longer based merely on cash payments.

The mere change in the political position of classes, their alternative advents to power, makes but little alteration in the intrinsic tendencies of Society. Those tendencies, as they existed at the time of the change, exist still, and the economic structure of Society to which they pointed is bound to come soon. From the point of view of the modern State, it is of more importance how the citizens act than what they possess. Consequently the State should certainly give or take away property, better still distribute it either to individuals or to the community, if it can by this means induce its subjects to act with it and not in opposition to it.

This brings us back to the underlying principle of modern sociology, viz.: that in the process of evolution, it is function that must be stressed rather than property or class; that functions, when brought into relation with the State, affording, as they do, a real and effective representation of

public interests, bend to its service the various forms of class and property.

This prevalent impulse towards the recognition of function as a dominant factor was bound to influence Fascism. Finding itself in competition with Socialism, not only in the field of theory but in that of practical organization, and forced to deal with the mass of the people, it has hit, almost by chance, on this principle of function when it sought to differentiate itself from Socialism, with regard to the new economic order to be aimed at and the new methods to be pursued. Not being bound by prejudice to any special theories or forms of action, Fascism has seized on this principle, without much inquiry, at once recognizing its justice.

This recognition, however, is still vague and half unconscious ; it is, for the moment, hardly more than the idea that all classes and categories should be bound together, under a common aim and mutual control, to work together in the public interest. There are signs, however, as we shall see later on, that this somewhat vague idea is growing into a definite theory and will take form in institutions.

Under a dictatorship there is no chance for the class war to develop, at least not in its usual forms. At such times, any alteration which the State undergoes is due rather to pressure from within than to any process of permeation from without. The State tends rather to widen its own sphere of control than to fall under outside control. The result of the two methods may, however, be the same ; provided that the dictator-

ship be wise enough to make good use of such factors as are constructive, transforming adversaries into friends and inducing them to second its efforts.

We must not forget that any dictatorship introduces into the interplay of economic and social forces that incalculable factor, the will of man, which is more or less consciously intelligent and far-seeing, a factor to which economists and sociologists are so unwilling to attribute any influence in moulding the social order. The fate of the dictatorship depends entirely on its success in modifying, or actually eliminating, by means of a better social order, the fundamental causes of the class war and substituting for it new motives of equal potency.

It cannot be denied that the class war is to-day a reality. The Fascisti do not hide from themselves that eventually it will be waged, even by them, but what they wish for is rather a collaboration of classes. This, however, cannot be imposed artificially, nor can it be favoured by favouring one class above another, so as to render the latter submissive by weakening it. The class war will be put an end to only by a new order of Society. The competition will then take place, not between classes, but between functional organizations for the service of the community.

State organization during the war gave a glimpse of something of the kind. The control of food and of industry was a means of uniting all classes and all professions in the public interest, and was so backed by public opinion that this functional dictatorship was sanctioned as a means of organization and defence for the public benefit.

The methods of the Russian Bolshevic Government and those of Italian Fascism are certainly, both of them, continuations of this war-time experiment, although this is not fully realized. It is not everyone who understands that, during the war, a method was being worked out for creating a Nation-State, that is to say, a State acting effectively in the interests of the Nation, a State without classes, a State of national-workers; and that this method was able to approve itself to the public, only because it could claim that its purpose was the good of the Nation, even if it involved the sacrifice from every citizen of his gains, his labour, and his life.

The defects and merits of this method have never been thoroughly examined; it remains to us a useful experiment, and whenever Nations are confronted by serious and urgent problems, they now turn to this method. Repeated trials may make of it a recognized and permanent policy, when it has been pruned of the crudities that disfigured the earlier experiment.

Fascism has come into power with startling suddenness; a movement of emotion and action, it was guided and animated by slogans that served to sweep into a single group people of every class. There has not yet been time for it to make constructive and up-to-date programmes and elaborate theories. It has now, but only recently, begun to think, to use brain instead of muscle.

It would be vain to attempt to set out in detail the changes that have taken place in Fascist thought. Both the forces of Fascism and the

tasks that it has to tackle have grown with such lightning rapidity that it is impossible to sum up the whole situation in a definite statement. No sooner did it seem possible to represent to the world any special trend of opinion or any particular idea as the banner of a programme, than other considerations and other interests came up to confuse the issue. It happens that there have been no pedants among the followers of Fascism, who might have limited and arrested the movement while it was still in a state of flux, by stereotyping it prematurely.

The sole formative impulse which has been general and constant throughout the whole growth of the movement is the idea of the Nation; the desire to make that idea real and living to all the people of Italy, so that it may become an axiom and a creed with everyone that every chance of social progress must be through, and by, the Nation. This was the meaning of the opposition to Socialism and also to every other movement, such as the "Cattolico-Popolare," which, rightly or wrongly, they stigmatize as anti-national.

But even this impulse was not clearly expressed in programmes and definitions. Fascism was far from conceiving the Nation as the highest unit of civilization, which lifts the individual to a higher level and gives him a share in a wider and fuller life, and Patriotism, as a discipline of disinterested service, to be rendered, day by day, for the welfare of the community.

It was only when it came into power that Fascism found itself on firm ground and saw clearly that it must have a wider basis, or its power would

not last. To strengthen and enlarge the foundation of the State is, therefore, its predestined task.

It is impossible to form a wholly unbiassed estimate of historical events while they are taking place ; one's judgment is bound to be influenced by the bent of one's own mind. The present writer is neither Fascist nor Bolshevist, but Guildsman. It is from the Guildsman's point of view that he looks at phenomena. He tries to understand Fascism as a historical event, how it came into existence and why, how it is functioning, and what results are probable.

Our purpose is to set forth the facts, tendencies, ideas. We do not wish either to justify or to condemn. We shall not give all the facts of the situation, but only those which we consider important in their results, those that determine, or are likely to determine, future events—the working facts. In any historical process, one meets with facts and ideas which tend to alter its course, but, being unable to do so, are passed by and left on one side. Such facts and ideas may reappear eventually when the process in question has run its course.

We will not sit in judgment nor give any definite verdicts ; these must await the historians of the next generation. Above all it will rest with them to decide whether so many massacres and so much destruction were inevitable.

As for us, although it is the fashion, just now, to be violent and to approve of violence, while it is humiliating to be pacificist and humanitarian, yet we instinctively refuse to believe that violence, bloody and destructive, is inevitable in order to

arrive at the point which has been reached in Russia, in Italy, and in other countries. We believe in the creative power of ideas and of will and action directed simply and solely to the welfare of mankind. We have faith in the social nature of man and in the militant force of the ideal.

We are convinced that the "National Being," which is built up by hidden factors through countless generations, can be attained only by giving to those factors the conscious recognition that will strengthen and vitalize them. The future must be created by the living forces that endure.

Man is born and grows out of the substance out of which he is formed, and so it is from the substance of the Society of to-day that we must mould, by our actions, the Society of the future.

CHAPTER II

THE ORIGIN OF FASCISTS AND LEGIONARIES

IT was said of Fascism, long before it came into power, by sociologists of no political bias, that it marked the commencement of a new historical cycle in Italy. They saw in Fascism a counter-current opposed to the wave of Democratic Socialism, which prevailed in Italy till very recently, and saw that the latter would be, in course of time, overwhelmed by it. The cycle of so-called Democratic Socialism was giving place to a new cycle which held possibilities that could not be definitely foreseen.[1]

Then with the advent of the Fascist Government, the impression that times were changing became widely spread. We say advisedly "impression," because no one is clear, even yet, as to the precise nature of the change, as to the direction in which this new social cycle is likely to move.

In order to form some idea—for, as yet, no purely Fascist theories have been elaborated concerning social evolution—all we can do is to go back to that first impression which was intuitive.

[1] G. Sensini: "Contro-Oscillazioni di Sentimenti," in *La Critica Politica*, May 16, 1921, and "L'Inizio in Italia di un Nuovo Ciclo-Sociale," in *La Vita Italiana*, November 15, 1922.

Whence came that impression of a new cycle of Society? It came not so much from any statements or verbal promises of the Fascisti as from a very general feeling that the State was being reinforced, while, up to that time, there had been a very general consciousness that it was in an enfeebled condition, crumbling into decay.

I think that this complete reversal of a profound impression widely spread among the people, an impression that affected not only their sentiments but their lives, is in itself a most important indication of the commencement of a new chapter in social development. Already in many Italians this impression is so vivid that, although they have not joined the Fascisti and are not in sympathy with them on all points, yet they conscientiously support them just because Fascism seeks to give stability to the State; in very many others this impression is still little more than an instinct; although they have not really inquired what foundation they have for their impression, yet they feel attracted by Fascism; there are others, both individuals and groups, driven to support it by their interests and their activities, which cannot be carried on under unstable conditions of the State.

Thus Fascism finds direction and support as a result of its own line of action, which meets the needs of vast groups of the population, and thus, from the deeds which were forced upon it by the rush of events and the sudden influx of unmanageable adherents, emerges the one task which it recognizes as of first importance: to re-establish the social equilibrium, to give stability at any price and by any means to the State; and for

this task it receives support and a wide sanction throughout the country.

From this it follows that to inquire whether a Fascist Government will tend to drive the State towards the right or towards the left, if it will be for "reaction" or for "progress," is labour wasted, which will decide nothing, as all these terms and queries are arbitrary. In view of the task to be performed, they are terms of reference that have been superseded. It has never been shown that the State can find its equilibrium by moving this way rather than that, to the right rather than to the left.

Virtually, it is to everybody's interest that the State should be stable; nowadays the most extreme revolutionaries begin to see that their method of bringing about the downfall of the State is of no use even for their own ends. You never know who will be buried by a social earthquake.

Therefore it is a fatal error that the State should turn now right, now left, towards the Conservative Party, for instance, or the Radical towards the plutocracy or the proletariate, because the State ought to stand for the interests of all, ought to have its own principle of growth.

By affirming this principle of its own the State is enabled to claim the services of all, and to render service to all, and thus to gain a steady and sure position.

This assured position will tend to eliminate all disintegrating influences, whether conservative or revolutionary, and to strengthen all those which help to stabilize it either by means of reviving

factors that have held sway in the past or by initiating a new social order.

The State has been so worn out and weakened by the events of the past, the machinery of government has become so sensitive to pressure and violence, that a very short experience will suffice to determine which factors contribute to its stability and which tend to undermine it.

The question is not, then, as it is generally stated, whether the cycle which is developing to-day in Italy will lead back to the past or onwards to a new social order, not even as to whether it will soon come to an end or will cover a long period of years; it behoves us rather to ask how and through what agents can Fascism restore stability to the State?

Vilfredo Pareto, the great experimental theorist, who has been the first to apply to sociology the method of logical study founded on experience, already in use in the natural sciences, warns us that:

" When one talks of a disturbed equilibrium which is becoming stable again, one does not, by any means, imply a return to precisely the same conditions as before; thus it would be absurd, for instance, to suppose that anyone who advises Regionalism proposes to reconstruct the separate States into which Italy was divided before 1859.[1] Economic and social equilibrium is not static but dynamic, and just as one cannot dip twice into the same water in a river, so one cannot reconstruct

[1] See chapter on Regionalism in my book, *Guilds and Co-operatives in Italy*. London, 1923.

precisely a condition of equilibrium as it existed in the past; to restore an equilibrium that has been disturbed means to approach a new condition of equilibrium.

"Moreover, if one considers the wave-form of economic and social phenomena, it becomes apparent that the average general direction of progress, which is the only one that it is important to study, is often contrary to that of special periods in its undulatory course. It is a serious error to conclude that a movement which one has traced in the past will necessarily follow the same course in the future. The arguments brought forward to-day to prove that the 'rise of the proletariate' is bound to take place are falsified by this error, and so are many others. History affords an infinitude of examples where one sees that, in contradiction to the hypothesis on which these arguments rest, it is actually when the direct advance seems most rapid, that retrogression is imminent. Thus the growing anarchy towards the end of the Roman Republic brought to a head the strict organization of the Empire, yet just at the moment when the organization had become most rigid, it gave way to the anarchy of the Middle Ages.

"Thus the problem which is before us to-day is not that of prophesying rises or falls, but of finding out by what means the conditions of social and economic equilibrium may be altered, so as to effect a change in the course of events."[1]

It behoves us, then, to examine the chief causes

[1] "L'Avvenire economico e sociale" in *La Critica Politica*, 16 febbraio, 1921.

which have brought about the overthrow of Society as it was, and to see whether these causes are growing weaker or stronger.

Most revolutionary movements are born from the breaking up of a social system, and burst forth as soon as the equilibrium of the State becomes involved. They tend to take possession of the Government in order to regain the stability that the State has lost. In the last analysis the State is always the pivot around which social contests are fought.

"Always," as Pareto says, "in every human community two forces stand in opposition, one which may be called centripetal, tends to a concentration of power at the centre, the other, which may be called centrifugal, tends to its partition.

"With endless alternation the point of equilibrium of these two forces changes now to one side, now to the other, not with the regularity of any definite rule, but variably according to circumstances, and these oscillations show themselves in many and various phenomena.

"To one of these periods of change in mediæval Europe was given the title, the Feudal Period." [1]

When one studies the history of various times and various countries one finds similar oscillations.

The rupture of equilibrium may come through pressure either from without or from within, from causes either material or spiritual, through the buffeting of enemies, or through an impulse of faith, but most often social convulsions are produced not by one alone of these factors, but by

[1] Vilfredo Pareto: "Traformazione della Democrazia." Milan, 1920.

all of them, acting in unison. It follows that after regaining stability, after one of these convulsions, we do not find ourselves in an entirely different social order from that which preceded the break, but, in the most favourable case, in a social order which represents a new synthesis of the aforesaid elements, grouped afresh round a new central idea and forming the basis for a new system of Society.

Thus Fascism, born at a time of social upheaval, grew stronger as the disintegration of Society proceeded, until the State itself was undermined, and then, by an almost automatic transformation—for the formal conquest of power took place without a blow—became itself the State; while, little by little, all those elements which had broken away from the old State joined forces with it. Hence arose the paradox of a revolution "through tradition," clamouring for law and order, while the so-called reactionaries were those who were really revolutionary and acted illegally.

The origin of Fascism goes back to the outbreak of the Great War, when Italy was still neutral, but when it had become obvious that she would not remain so; it goes back to just that period when murmurs began to be heard in the country against the neutrality of Italy, and a revolutionary element began to rise against the Government who favoured it.

The revolutionaries were moved by the conviction that the war had brought with it a situation of world revolution, a period of transition to a Society which might be called "Socialist," and they therefore wished Italy to intervene, and organized themselves into "Fasci" for interven-

tion, with a view to exercising pressure on the State, on the working class, and on public opinion for the abandonment of neutrality.

Many members of the first bodies of Interventionists, the "Fasci for Revolutionary Action," were Socialist in outlook—now ex-Socialist—like Mussolini, the former editor of the official paper of the Socialist Party, and their followers, many of them Trade Union groups with their leaders, such as Corridoni and Alceste de Ambris, and were backed by Syndicalist theorists and publicists such as Panunzio, Mantica, and others. These were men who held extreme views in the Labour Movement, both political and Trade Union.

Mussolini had been the leader of the most uncompromising revolutionary faction of the political Socialist Movement just as some of the others had been the chief exponents of the revolutionary tendencies in the Trade Union Movement, of those elements, in short, always opposed to the reformist, evolutionary, parliamentary methods for Socialism, and which, already in the spring of 1914, were backing the spontaneous revolt of workers aiming at the conquest of the State and a complete change of rulers.

With them, in support of the necessity for the war, were marshalled the Republicans, followers of Mazzini, and many intellectuals and University students, worshippers of the ideal of revolution, as the former of the idea of national unity.

The Socialists were never indifferent to the problem of national unity from an ethical and territorial standpoint, but they maintained that that problem could be peacefully solved as soon as the

social problem had been dealt with internationally, State by State; that, in other words, the Socialist point of view, once dominant in all countries, would have diffused over all Nations the spirit of conciliation and brotherhood, and would have led to an almost automatic solution of questions of territory, race, and national sovereignty. Events, however, have given the lie to this theory by always bringing the national problem to the front before the social.

The Interventionists became aware of this fact and proceeded to make theories to account for it; they saw that the national question must first be solved before they could pass on to the social question; that the problem of national independence and national unity, still unsolved, were insurmountable obstacles to all social actions; that these problems, keeping alive many issues and many acute interests and fostering a national myth, half articulate yet extremely powerful and ready to become dynamic at the first opportunity, prevented any crystalization of that real desire for a social change which was very widely spread.

Hence arose the idea that it was only after the achievement of national unity that the forces of social revolution could be brought into play.

For these reasons they threw themselves into the campaign in pursuit of national ends, and afterwards into the war itself, with the same fervour, faith, and spirit of sacrifice with which they would have thrown themselves into the struggle for a new social order.

From these groups of "Fasci Interventisti," with the same leaders, though not always with the same rank and file, were created, after the war, in the

spring of 1919, the "Fasci di Combattimento," composed mainly of ex-soldiers, which transformed themselves in 1921 into the Fascist National Party.[1]

The true origin, then, of Fascism is to be found at a time when no one yet dreamed of Bolshevism, and cannot therefore have had for its principal object the overthrow of Communism, and is, indeed, very far from being the "white guard" of the ruling classes.

The apparent changes that have taken place in its outlook and conduct can all be traced to that fundamental conception of the Nation which has, all along, been its watchword as opposed to the conception of Internationalism.

Those who obstinately refuse to recognize the national ideal, and all that it implies, have been and will remain its enemies.

There has been no real change in the mental make-up of the Interventionists during these changes of name and of aspect. They have remained revolutionaries, though on a different road. "It would not be," as Pareto says, "the first time in politics that men who start for one place find themselves arriving at another whither they had no intention of going."

[1] "Fascism has been, and is, nothing but the continuation of the 'Interventionism' of 1914–15, just as the 'Fasci di Combartimento' (bands of ex-combatants) are the representatives and glorious offspring of the 'Fasci d'Azione Revoluzionaria' of 1915, to whom belongs the credit of propaganda of the war among the masses, not so much as a military necessity, but as the best hope for revolution, as a mystical re-birth for the nation and for humanity."—Dino Grandi (Fascist): "Le Origini e la Missione del Fascismo," in *Biblioteca di Studi Sociali*, Bologna, 1922.

The Interventionists laid great stress on the question—for or against the war. The Socialists stood up for neutrality, not only for the reasons aforesaid, but also as humanitarians and pacifists, not only on account of their traditional aversion to any kind of violence, and their entire unpreparedness for any violent action, even in defence of Socialism itself, and because they were deeply convinced that the massacre of millions of living beings was a sacrifice entirely disproportionate to the eventual advantage which might accrue to the Nation from a victorious war.

The Catholics, too, both intellectuals and the masses were, on the whole, against the war for humanitarian reasons. Other groups, who were in favour of neutrality, belonged to the governing class, with the veteran Giolitti as their chief exponent : their opposition to the war was not based on any noble ideas, but only on indirect considerations of transient national interests, or, more often, of the interests of groups and individuals, which they thought could be served by accepting certain concessions of territory, inhabited by Italians, which were thrown to them as a sop.

Against this undignified bargaining for neutrality public opinion rebelled, and Italy came into the war under an agreement, neither clear nor far-seeing, as everyone now knows, giving no kind of security as to the method of carrying on the war, or of supplying Italy with provisions, raw materials, and munitions, and no guarantee as to the fruits of eventual victory.

In the fiery atmosphere of passion, discussions between Interventionists and Neutralists, for and

against war, soon degenerated and lost all civility; fierce invective was hurled to and fro by the contending parties; there was no lack of accusations of being in the pay of one or other of the groups of belligerents; no one got credit for good faith. Hatred took deep root that has never yet been eradicated.

The country was divided into two camps. Every claim to citizenship was denied to the Socialist Party and, with it, to that large section of the proletariate who stood firm against the war. Socialism and a great part of organized labour were under the ban of the Nation—became outcasts. One side were "Nationalists," the other "Anti-Nationalists."

Opposition of sentiment hardened into facts, and facts gave birth to ideas and watchwords which served, in their turn, to foster and embitter the original opposition. The structure of Society was shaken to its base.

Nor did this bitterness of feeling, and the actions it led to, cease with the entrance of Italy into the war; violent discussions for and against the war continued even more fiercely. At every critical and difficult phase of the war itself there was sure to be an attempt by one faction or the other to get the upper hand.

This state of things went on even after the armistice, and has not yet come to an end.

Few perceived, few could be convinced, and very few would honestly admit, during the war, that a real love of country did spring to life again even in those who, from intellectual convictions, or from partisanship, were opposed to the war, and that

even they were therefore amenable to national discipline. And few perceived that methods of Nation-building were being elaborated; methods which tended to wipe out differences of opinion, and might be able to fill the gulf caused by party passion, if only they were carried out with goodwill and enthusiasm.

The wonderful discipline of national citizenship was interpreted as something imposed or endured, and not as that fusion of soul, fired by the spirit of sacrifice, which it was in reality; those who posed as patriots, and professed to force patriotism on other people, were aggressive and offensive, putting on an air of superiority; while the others did not protest that their devotion was the spontaneous outcome of a sentiment of solidarity, but accepted the position of being forced to act patriotically.

The habit of angry invective, the want of courage, on the part of both parties, to abandon petty prejudice and mutual intolerance, nipped in the bud the new feeling of love of country and obliterated all the lessons that might have been learned during the time of stress, the moment that national discipline seemed no longer absolutely essential. Hatred and party passion took once more the place of that national solidarity which might have proved so fruitful.

It is impossible to understand the full meaning of all this without going back at least as far as the period that preceded 1898. The cycle of events now drawing to a close began somewhere about that year. Socialist and democratic senti-

ment then began to spread through the ranks of labour, rural and industrial, and to take form in serious attempts at political and industrial organization, while even before 1898 Socialist theories, formulated by intellectuals, had been widely accepted. The wave of social democracy rose rapidly with political, financial, and economic results. The proletariate, under Socialist guidance, attained to a position in politics, with increasing power in Parliament and on local authorities, secured a higher standard of living and created many Trade Unions and Co-operatives. Things had gone so far by 1913 and 1914 that the proletariate were beginning to approach the mastery of power.

But they were held back not so much by the resistance of the State as by the spirit of legality in their own Reformist leaders, for whom the Socialist method of conquering the State was identified with a gradual process of encroaching control, without violent shock or any great disturbance of social equilibrium. They exercised a restraining influence because they did not think that the proletariate was ripe for sole power in the State; but they would not have been able to hold things back for long, but for the outbreak of the World War, which shook the whole system of Society and started entirely new currents.

Before the war, save for a few episodes of conflict, the steady rise of Socialism was virtually unopposed in the country, for there was a general conviction that Socialism was inevitable.

For many years the conquests of Socialism and the formation of Labour institutions were allowed

to proceed without systematic opposition on the part of any efficiently organized force with a clear and definite anti-Socialist outlook. Socialism was supported by a widespread spirit of democracy in the country and in Parliament.

If Socialism at that time met with any serious antagonism, it was largely from certain large groups of workers who isolated themselves from the great mass of Socialist Labour, and organized themselves into non-Socialist Trade Unions, Co-operatives, and parties, but even these had a Socialist tendency, so that, in the end, they would have been no hindrance. One may say, indeed, that the antagonism came from what was, in fact, only a sub-species of Socialism.

The counter currents to Socialism were relatively weak because people saw that it was not really a revolutionary force, and did not tend to interfere with the equilibrium of the State, but rather to support and strengthen it by disciplining the mass of the workers and stimulating production; the demand for a higher standard of living forced employers to introduce more modern methods of production in order to increase productivity. The rise of Socialism went hand in hand with the progress of general prosperity.

As Socialism did not really interfere with the stability of the State, there was no reason why it should be considered anti-national, and indeed many non-Socialists among the Liberals and Democrats were very much in sympathy with it, and not merely on humanitarian grounds. In short the class-war, if we adopt that stereotyped phraseology, was not waged in Italy with that ruthlessness and

absence of chivalry which has characterized it in other countries.

The numerous Socialist Co-operative Societies in every branch of activity—industry, rural, and commercial—though they may have put some restraint on speculations, and such restraint was, after all, a public benefit, did not represent, in any true sense, a movement towards expropriation, as was commonly believed, and even claimed sometimes by the Socialists themselves, but towards bringing fresh initiative to the productivity of the country, and thus increasing its wealth.

The peaceful development of Socialism was also favoured by the fact that it met with comparatively little opposition from business men, a class, in Italy, that is apt to have democratic leanings. In a word, Socialism has met, on the whole, with more sympathy than antipathy, and this has greatly furthered its growth.

When Socialism was put under the ban, owing to its attitude towards the war, it found itself suddenly isolated, together with the various institutions under its control. The democratic sentiment which had formerly afforded a friendly atmosphere favourable to its growth, was now turned into a quite different channel, that of the national aims and ideals involved in the war; and the loss was acutely felt by Socialism.

The current of social democracy which, up to that time, had been growing almost unopposed, began to weaken and give way to the new social impulse that had arisen in the march of events.

Though in a self-chosen position of isolation and neutrality during the war, Socialism would not

shrink from the duties and responsibilities which, at such a time, were encumbent upon it as administrator of so many important municipalities and Co-operatives. Many municipalities, great and small, under Socialist direction, organized public assistance and the control of the provisioning of the population in an exemplary manner, while the Socialist Co-operatives, not seeking nor wishing to seek profit, were invaluable in regulating prices; especially the Co-operatives for agricultural produce, which undertook intensive production of those commodities most urgently required by the Nation—corn, for instance—and not those which might have fetched a higher price, as did many private landowners, and thus performed acts of tangible national solidarity which were recognized as such by the civil and military authorities.

All this they did simply as a duty to the population for whom they were administrators and to the State, without any ostentatious patriotism, and maintaining all the time their attitude of neutrality. This conduct was very upsetting to those people who could not recognize patriotism, unless it was fussy and ostentatious.

When the war came to an end Socialism received a new and unexpected lease of life. The scanty fruits of the war, the so-called "Peace," which was just to no one, either conquered or conqueror, seemed to justify the reserve of Socialism with regard to the war, and to upset the calculations of the Interventionists; anti-Socialist sentiment weakened rapidly in consequence.

The new wave of Socialism was re-inforced by

the influx of all those, from any rank of Society, who thought that they had suffered unjustly during the war from the action of either the civil or military authorities, from privation either at home or in the trenches; of all those who, when they came back from the war, found the country quite unprepared to support them, or to give them the work, the land, and the status which had been promised them by the Government and the governing class while the war was going on.[1]

It seemed to these men that Socialism alone would be able to give them what they had a right to expect after all their sufferings and sacrifices, and to give it them at once.

Added to this rapid inflation of the Socialist Movement there was the revolutionary attitude which it began to display. It was stimulated by the example of the Russian Revolution—though not by any very critical examination of the event—to abandon the law-abiding character and evolutionary methods of its pre-war period, and to affirm the inevitability of the social revolution—the "complete" social revolution.

The "social myth" of the Russian Revolution, its implied promise of an immediate solution of all social problems and an improvement in the lot of every individual sufferer, attracted an ever-increasing crowd of followers to Italian Socialism.

[1] "All parties vied with one another, just then, in giving promises, vague, indeterminate, and alluring. They promised land to the peasant and factories to the soldiers; promises that meant nothing to those who made them, while those who received them considered them as only their just deserts."—Giolitti, President of the Cabinet, in a speech at the meeting of the Senate, September 26, 1920.

In the camp of the Interventionists many, like Bissolati and his followers, declared for the Wilsonian policy, accepting the territorial and material sacrifices which it entailed for Italy and were branded as "Renouncers"; others, on the other hand, foreseeing the approaching overthrow of the democratic ideal, for which they had honestly fought, returned to Socialism, which was now taking on the colour of Communism.

But there were other Interventionists who rebelled against the diplomacy "that cheated us of our victory" and brought nothing but defeat, material, territorial, and even spiritual to Italy, and it was these who, led by Mussolini, organized, early in 1919, the "Fasci di Combattimento" in order to uphold the claim of Italy to the material and spiritual fruits of victory.

They turned, often with language of the greatest ferocity, against everyone and everything that had "Wilsonian or Renunciatory" tendencies, even against some of their own former friends, Interventionists, while they agitated resolutely against all Neutralists, but above all against the Socialists, who troubled themselves but little, or not at all, about Italian national problems of the day, and gave no support to the campaign for the recovery of national rights, but made common cause with the Russian Revolution, to which was generally attributed the weakening of the Entente, the prolongation of the war, and the increase of the sacrifice that Italy was called upon to make.

At the same time the Fascisti supported d'Annunzio, who was agitating for the Italianization of Fiume, refused by Wilson, and had, against

the will of the politicians, organized the march on Fiume. The taking of Fiume (September 1919), the military action of the Interventionists against a foreign army was of great importance, national and international, because it was the first revolt of the people against iniquitous agreements and treaties, and by no means the last.

D'Annunzio's ex-soldiers, who formed the first forces of the Fascisti, gave the first recruits to the legion of volunteers, which was formed in Fiume during the occupation of the Allies; with these were joined certain "deserters," as they were called, from the Italian Army, grenadiers especially.

At the moment of the taking of Fiume there was complete fusion between d'Annunzio and Fascism. Mussolini was suddenly inspired by the revolutionary spirit of the Fiume enterprise, and Fascism, with its revolutionary eagerness, sent volunteers to Fiume and collected money for it.

D'Annunzio, on his side, gave support to the first struggles of Fascism during the elections of November 16, 1919. And Fascism alone in Italy approved the "Constitution of Fiume," with all its social and political significance.[1]

Rome and the Socialists were against it. Rome signed the Treaty of Rapallo and drove d'Annunzio out of Fiume, cannonading him and his unarmed people.

Rome thus cut short the danger of a Gildist political regime inaugurated at Fiume.

Such a regime planted in the middle of Europe was an international peril greater than Bolshevism

[1] Umberto Foscanelli, *D'Annunzio e il Fascismo.* Milan, 1923.

itself, for it implied national insurrections. The rulers of every country feared and hated it.

The Fascisti accepted the Treaty of Rapallo (November 12, 1920), and by implication, the removal of d'Annunzio from Fiume, and, by so doing, they separated themselves from d'Annunzio's Movement.

They were too deeply involved in the serious situation that existed in Italy to be able to devote themselves chiefly to the question of Fiume, and to the ideology that was connected with that name.

Italy was just then in the midst of that tragic period that followed the occupation of the factories by the workers.

D'Annunzio returned to Italy and retired from active participation in political movements, while his followers spread through the country, organizing themselves into groups for the propaganda of his political ideas as embodied in the Constitution of Carnaro. Some of his followers joined Fascism, others would not take part in the civil war, the whirlpool into which the Fascisti were being inevitably drawn.

At that time Fascists and Legionaries could do nothing against the growing power of Socialism. They were not actually hostile. What they were keen about was that Socialism should recognize how Italian rights had been trampled under foot by diplomacy, and how indispensable it was to vindicate and assert them.

The Fascisti, for instance, though they denied the possibility, in Italy, of a revolution like the Russian one, and warmly opposed any attempt to

bring one about, yet affirmed the necessity for such radical changes in the constitution—a republic included—as to amount, in all essentials, to a social revolution. They made conciliatory offers on several occasions to Socialism :

" Mussolini once made a dignified request to the Leninists for a truce and, during the occupation of the factories, proclaimed his ' benevolent neutrality ' towards the Federation of Italian Metallurgical Operatives (F.I.O.M.), which was conducting the strike, being determined that Fascism should never be the bulwark, consciously or unconsciously, of the bourgeoisie, when it was threatened by a Communist attempt at expropriation." [1]

While Fascism was not in any sense the defender of the plutocracy and of the existing political regime, d'Annunzio's Movement at Fiume was a centre of social revolution, not only on account of the guild constitution which he issued and, in the end, actually established at Fiume, but also because he got into touch with movements all over the world based on national self-determination, in Russia, Ireland, Egypt, Turkey, and India, and because of its moral character and fighting capacity.

Side by side with the Socialist-Communist revolution, another social revolution on a National basis was fighting for its life. For it must be remembered that there was hardly a single Nation for whom the " Peace " had solved the question of nationality; if these two tendencies could have worked together they might certainly have achieved

[1] Pietro Gorgolini (facista), *Il Fascismo nella vita Italiana*, p. 102. Turin, 1922.

the social revolution. The faith of the Socialist, fired by the fervour of the patriot, might have swept away all obstacles.

Unfortunately the Socialists would not understand—they never have understood—the tremendous practical value of the sentiment of nationality; the habit of mind generated by the "class-war" theory was dead against any *rapprochement* of any kind with the Fascist and Legionaries.

They felt themselves already victorious, it was their turn to boast, and they seemed to gloat over the failure of the Interventionists' programme.

The Socialists determined not to recognize the revolutionary good faith of the others, and not to forget the insults received at their hands before and during the war. They treated them now as a negligible quantity. Intoxicated by the Russian myth, they failed to understand either the actual course of events in Russia itself, or the other currents of feeling that were alive and active in their own country, ignoring everything they did not wish to see.

Since they made no effort to restore the atmosphere of sympathy which had encouraged their earlier successes, they continued to be branded as "anti-National," and consequently—though they did make a wider appeal and did strengthen their position—yet they failed to establish that social equilibrium which was necessary for the successful carrying out of their plans.

The Socialists believed that their hour had come —and they were right—but a social movement which aims at obtaining the power of the State must show skilled statesmanship at every step,

so that its advance may be steady and unwavering.

But Socialism was innocent of all statesmanship; the campaign was carried on without caution or foresight; the most elementary rules of strategy were neglected; the Socialist position was left wholly unprotected, while adverse sentiment and rival movements were freely allowed to make head against it. Bad generalship was the determining cause of defeat.

CHAPTER III

THE BREAKDOWN OF THE STATE

THE convulsion brought about by the collision between the National-Social ideal and the ideal of Social Communism would not necessarily have involved the State and hurried it on the rocks; the disaster was due in no small degree to the fault of the State itself, to the fact that a third ideal, brought to birth by the war, the ideal of State-reconstruction in the interests of the whole community—an ideal which seemed able to reconcile and absorb the other two—broke down entirely.

The folly of the Government, of the oligarchy which still held the reins though it did not know how to govern, permitted the growing conflict between the two ideals to go on unchecked, allowing wider and ever wider interests to become involved in it; so that what was at first an opposition between two diverse social myths became transformed into a conflict between interests and classes to the great injury of the State itself.

As we have noticed already, new methods of Nation-building began to develop during the war, from the necessity of the case, but few people perceived that these methods had features that might with advantage be retained permanently.

All the Nations, including Italy, set about

adopting a unified organization in order to increase their inefficiency for the task imposed on them by the war. The Governments were forced to inaugurate a regime of iron discipline, which was voluntarily adopted by many of their subjects, while there were others who had to be brought into line either by coercion, by promise of honours and emoluments after the war, or by allowing them to make profits while it lasted.

From this discipline, in some cases voluntarily adopted, in others imposed from outside, a real spirit of service grew up gradually—a new and widespread recognition that most kinds of active work could be looked on as public service.

Thus, during the war, we had become accustomed to be directed by the State towards one aim: Victory. The State had become, for all practical purposes, identified with the Nation. That word seemed to have taken on a new significance. "Nations" had become co-ordinated bodies led towards the accomplishment of tasks set in the common interest. It seemed that we had at last merged our personal and class interests into a broader national interest and that we had learned how to deal consciously with collective issues.

From this, the quintessence, as it seemed of our war experience, students of social problems predicted that a period of social reconstruction would follow the war, and busied themselves, in all good faith, in working out programmes for it which cunning politicians made specious promises of realizing. Thus "social reconstruction" became a myth appealing to the imagination, keeping

together the armies of progress and inspiring the working masses with patience and hope.

I, myself, believed that, when the war was over, the functions of organization and direction would remain in the hands of the State, and that the national machinery which had been brought into existence in several countries would go on: that, in short, a Nation would develop henceforth as an association between the various productive forces, organized in common, on a well-thought-out plan for the benefit of the whole Nation, new organs being developed as they were needed for the exercise of new functions.

"If one goes more deeply into the matter, one sees at once that this interpretation of social tendencies rests entirely on the supposition that Society will continue to develop along the path traced for it during the war; on the condition, that is to say, that the State retains control over economic organization and keeps in close touch with the needs of the Nation, in the very widest sense of that phrase, bringing knowledge and goodwill to bear on the supply of those needs; and further, on the condition that the economic classes shall be convinced and firmly believe that social progress can be brought about only by the working together in friendly co-operation, and on a national scale, of various organizations, that, in fact, for the future, the only really satisfactory economic unit is, and must be, the entire Nation.

"The fundamental law that all social problems depend, in the long run, on conscious organization, has never stood out so clearly and never has the fallacy been more apparent of that line

of argument so often advanced by irresponsible thinkers, that certain social facts and tendencies are 'inevitable' because they are founded on 'human nature' or on 'the nature of Society'; never has it been more clearly demonstrated that those tendencies deemed inevitable are so only in cases where they reflect definite aims and wishes; where, that is to say, they are the result of conscious intention or, at all events, where no conscious and intelligent effort has been made to oppose them.

"It must not be forgotten that the war has created nothing that is, in substance, new; all that it has done is to throw light on tendencies already in existence, accentuating them and bringing them often into new relations with each other, and to find out new methods of organizing the different Nations into a single economic system having a common end in view.

"In a word, the war has brought to our notice new methods of pursuing public ends. We have learnt to consider the needs of the moment. The productive classes act with more swiftness and decision than of old, and more co-ordination, having a more comprehensive end, a more definite task, in view, and being, in many cases, responsible to the State for its fulfilment. The State, in its turn, is rapidly falling into line and taking up its new duties, acquiring every day more efficiency in managing the business of the Nation, stimulating and restraining by turns the various industrial bodies to organize themselves or, where necessary, to reorganize themselves in conformity with the needs of the Nation.

"If, after the war, the inspiration of national service for the performance of a great national task, which serves now to regulate and co-ordinate all this awakened activity, should come to an end, the bond of national unity will be loosened and the appeal of the Nation-State will grow weaker; but the forces of production will retain the organization and effectiveness learnt during the war, and will convert them to narrow individual interests, thus exploiting the national ideal which will go on bearing fruit, as is so often the fate of ideals, after its root has perished.

"And it is obvious that those organizations, after the war, which are best organized and most sure of purpose, will be able to seize the opportunity and make themselves masters of the rest, even of the State, and to guide social development in the direction that suits their own interests." [1]

The State adopted the alternative of abdication and our prophecy has been verified. After the war, happy in the belief that it had saved and strengthened the Nation and provided a firm basis for its further development, the State failed altogether to profit by the warnings that came from Russia of the grave social crises with which it was threatened and for which it was bound, in the general interest, to prepare. The Government were foolish enough to think that with the aid of a few palliatives, a few insignificant surface reforms, a few doles to needy ex-soldiers, it would be able to pave the way towards the "inevitable" return

1 "The New Functions of the State in Production," in *Critica Sociale*, 1916.

to "normal conditions," to a restoration of pre-war equilibrium.

It was just as naïve to believe that a return to the politico-economic condition of the past was inevitable as to insist on the inevitability of a Communist revolution. The State never thought of facilitating the transformation of war production into peace production, leaving the great factories of war material—created because the Government had need of them, and at the bidding, to fall to pieces, with results equally bad for employers and workers. The State never thought of turning to the service of peace that spirit of patriotism that had been engendered by war.

Peace signed and no collective task set for it, National Unity, as an all-powerful machine for producing results on a national scale, broke up. The State has reverted to its pre-war functions without considering that the pre-war conditions, from which the said functions derived, were not, and could not be re-established, and that new conditions were claiming new functions. Thus nobody was ready and no machinery in existence for coping with the most dangerous enemy that had yet confronted the Nation: the social crisis.

The complete failure of the State as an organization capable of solving vital national issues without delay, as an authority with power to commandeer for this end material means, and the enthusiasm and devotion of its subjects has left the country entirely without guidance.

As Government control and the idea and function of reconstruction logically following from it had a stabilizing effect upon the community

during the war, so decontrol and the abandoning of social reconstruction as a national task was followed by tremendous confusion both in thought and in action.

Those powerful interests and influences that we have named "centripetal," which were always tending, while the war lasted, towards a concentration of power and contributing to its stability, first weakened and then became transformed into centrifugal forces that tended constantly to the division of Society into competing groups. Each of these forces was left entirely free to follow its own course, to attempt the conquest, if it choose, of the State itself.

To quote Pareto's masterly summing up of these phenomena :

"The change from centripetal to centrifugal forces means a transposition of the centre of gravity, and has certain characteristic results.

"During the period of transition, the Central Power, whether monarchical, oligarchical, democratic, or proletariate—the kind makes little difference—grows gradually weaker ; the sovereignty —so-called—of that Power tends to become an empty name and gradually to decay altogether, leaving its administration all over the country in ruins. The power of certain individuals grows, and of certain groups ; subordinate still in theory, they acquire practical independence. In consequence, those who do not form part of such groups, the weak, no longer protected by the sovereign, seek justice and protection elsewhere ; they place their faith in some powerful man, they associate themselves either openly or in secret with

others of the weaker sort, joining some corporation or commune or syndicate.

From this movement itself circumstances arise which oppose it. As time goes on, protection is apt to turn little by little into subjection ; the adversaries of the existing order increase in number, and if social and economic conditions are favourable, in power as well. On the other hand, those who have shared in the sovereignty of the State lose power and prestige because, as they become less in awe of the Central Power, rivalry increases between them and is apt to degenerate into open conflict bordering on anarchy, which will continue even after the Central Power is reinforced.

" The need of the weak for protection is universal. It is sought, when centrifugal forces prevail, from various local magnates and, when centripetal, from the Central Power. In the latter case, or when things are moving in that direction, a former Central Government, more or less new in form or in substance, sooner or later, with sudden violence or persistent effort, subdues the dominant oligarchy and proceeds once more to concentrate sovereignty in its own hands.

" It is noteworthy that a transformation of this kind is often favoured by one of those phenomena which claim to be religious ! We see this in Europe at the end of the Middle Ages, in Russia in the time of Ivan the Terrible, in Japan in the nineteenth century, and in many other cases ; nor should they be looked on as fortuitous coincidences, but as the natural consequence of relations that experience has made us aware of ; for a revival of religious feeling is a sign of increased

activity in those sentiments which constitute the bond of human society.[1]

International conflicts introduce a new element into the action of these forces, centripetal and centrifugal. In war-time the defeat of the Central Power may help to bring about its fall and, in that case, will help to promote a centrifugal tendency; victory may have an opposite effect. But this does not always follow. If victory has been purchased at great cost by the sacrifice of its subjects the Central Power may be weakened."[2]

The above are general historical considerations which were amply confirmed in Italy before Fascism came into power.

It must be remembered that the State was not wholly to blame for its enfeebled condition, for its inability to take a new departure, transforming its war-task into a peace-task. The life of the State is not isolated from the rest of the world or of the country, and is bound to be subject to many influences of all sorts; it would not be fair to deny that the various Governments which

[1] An important part of Pareto's *Sociology* is the theory of "residues" and "derivatives"; the "residues" are the manifestations of some of those fundamental sentiments which are the motive power of any human action. In Pareto's own words: "For those who have not read my *Sociology* I will say, without great precision, that the 'residues' correspond to the *religious* sentiments, provided that this latter term be understood in a very wide sense. 'Derivatives' are the myths, the theories, the pseudo-logical reasonings invented and applied by man in order to justify their own sentiments and actions." According to Pareto, the general form of Society is chiefly determined by the "residues" and not by the "derivatives"; the "residues" modify themselves very slowly; one must bring pressure to bear upon the "derivatives," which are more pliant than the "residues."

[2] Vilfredo Pareto, *The Transformation of Democracy*, pp. 41–3.

succeeded one another so rapidly in Italy during the last four or five years made every effort to "restore the authority of the State." The State emerged from the long war much weakened; then the question of Fiume and the other disasters of the Peace gave it blow after blow. Nevertheless, it might have found its feet if the various attempts it made had been well received in the country. Instead of this it met with opposition on all sides, and was therefore powerless to improve its position either by strong action or by legislative measures. The consequence was that the hostile elements in the country waxed stronger and stronger, and became positively anarchical.

Meanwhile, the State was obliged to relinquish its war-footing and there was nothing to take its place. It ought to have given up some of its work of control when the war was over and transformed its war-organization into an organization for peace which would have enabled it to take on national functions on a national scale—functions quite as vital for the life of the Nation as had been those directly concerned with the war.

Such reorganization of the State was opposed, first of all, by those very men whose business it was to supply the most urgent needs of the country. Those classes and organizations which might have enabled the State to undertake the work refused to come to its aid. Of course, the war-State was armed with unlimited authority and with military methods that enabled it either to do the work itself that was required to meet the needs of the country in war-time or to require that private firms or individuals should do it. When

the war ended military power was once more in abeyance, but the Labour State, which was almost unanimously demanded throughout the country, had not the support of Labour.

There ensued a critical situation: no war and no Labour; civil war and industrial crisis. No wonder that such a situation led to a regime dominated once more by the military spirit. Since an understanding between the Social-Communists and the Social-Nationalists was impossible, and the State was incapable of holding the balance between them, only two possible solutions remained. The alternatives were: the proletariate revolution—a strong proletarian State; or the national revolution—a strong national State.

Each of these alternatives was tried, for the critical post-war period in Italy has two phases; the one ended with the occupation of the factories, the other, with the conquest of the Government, by the Fascist Party.

The first period, which we may conveniently call "Bolshevic," is dominated by two factors: Syndicalism (carried beyond legal limits) and, on the political side, Social-Communism; the second period is chiefly dominated by military action, the action of the Fascisti, which was also carried beyond legal limits.

During the former period, Fascism had still but little determining influence. It was not Fascism, as is said so often, that put an end to this period. The Fascisti, for instance, did not oppose the first occupation of the factories. Mussolini himself approved the occupation of a factory at Dalmine in 1919, and as we have

already pointed out in the general occupation of the factories in September 1920, Fascism, in the person of the same Mussolini, declared its neutrality.[1] Several isolated acts of violence on the part of the Fascisti did take place, it is true, during the occupation of the factories and even earlier.

Mussolini himself admits that the short and troublous story of Fascism is limited, as to one of its phases, by this period of the occupation of the factories. It is true that it had already taken action against the exponents of Bolshevist propaganda, for instance, against the office of *Avanti*, the organ of the Socialist Party, and against the headquarters of the Communist societies of Trieste and Istria, which they looked on as centres of Slav propaganda against Italy, and that it was pledged to the cause of Fiume. During that phase Fascism was still predominantly National-Socialist, and, as such, it went on spreading; but as yet it was not very definite or closely constituted, and certainly did not take the line of being a purely anti-Labour movement; it was chiefly urban, and had Milan as its centre.

"There was, then, energetic activity on the part of the Fascisti far earlier than the occupation of the factories—August–September 1920—and it is absurd to ignore this as people often do. From March 1919 to November 1920 Fascism was

[1] G. B. Pozzi, *The First Occupation of the Factories in Italy in the Battle of Dalmine*, Bergamo, 1921. Mussolini does not deny his past. In a recent reprint of his speeches he has included that delivered before the workers of Dalmine, approving their creative-stay-in strike, " that does not interrupt but continues production." See Benito Mussolini, *Discorsi Politici*, p. 177. Milan, 1921.

issuing its orders with no uncertain sound, and holding aloft its banner, a banner to which the people flocked in ever-increasing multitudes of eager followers as soon as the second period of Fascism began—the period marked by Socialist reverses and catastrophes."[1]

Fascism came on the scene as an important movement, to be reckoned with only when Bolshevism was already declining, and just when the Legionaries were coming back from Fiume. It is the Popular-Catholic Movement, with its big representation in Parliament and on the Public Authorities, and its large number of Trade Unions and Co-operatives, that claims to have stemmed the tide of Bolshevism.

"We, almost alone at first in the Trade Union Movement, bore the brunt of the Bolshevic attack which came to a head in the strikes of January and February 1920 and in the subsequent Ministerial crisis." [2]

But even the Popular Catholic Party, with its own men in the Government and with its vast body of adherents throughout the country, were not in a position to curb the revolutionary movement; their own movement was not sufficiently homogeneous. The divergence of the interests it represented unfitted it for carrying out the proposals put forward in its programme; proposals which, if they could have been realized, would undoubtedly have restored the equilibrium of the State and might have established an efficient democratic regime, as, for instance, by incorporating

[1] *Gerarchia*, May 25, 1922.
[2] Manifesto of the Popular Catholic Party, October 20, 1922.

certain Labour organizations within the organic framework of the State. Problems might thus have been met which were underlying the revolutionary crisis and are still, even now, pressing for solution.

The Social-Communist impulse diminished in strength for several reasons, but especially—and this may seem paradoxical—because it turned against the existing State, thus weakening its authority. In other words, the Communists did not succeed in giving a legal form to their struggle. Indeed, one might say with more exactitude that they did not concern themselves with the question of right; they aimed at taking possession of everything and were certain of being able to do so, and they therefore took no interest in codifying any partial rights.

The powerful Trade Union Movement which had begun, before the war, a methodical improvement in the social order now gave way to revolutionary Syndicalism. Directly the war came to an end the Trade Unions began to grow stronger and to receive an ever-increasing influx of adherents. The membership rose to millions and, in addition to the actual members, there were masses of workers far larger in number who could be induced to act with them when occasion arose. Every class of workers, public servants included, were ready to join the Labour monopoly under a single united control.

The Syndicalist objective of Labour monopoly, which had already been actually achieved by some Trade Unions in certain districts even before the war, had two modes of action: industrial or

territorial. On the one hand it spread its control over an entire industry, as, for instance, that of the metal-workers, of transport (State, co-operative or private) or of textile workers ; on the other it acted as Trade Union control over every kind of industry and over the entire administrative life of a province or region, as in the valley of the Po, a predominantly agricultural district, where the monopoly of agricultural labour, held by the Trade Union of farm labourers and peasants, forms a centre for the Unions in all other trades.

Out of the monopoly of Labour organized by industry arose spontaneously the desire to take possession of the industry and the consciousness that the Trade Union was quite capable of managing it ; out of the monopoly of Labour organized territorially arose, on the other hand, especially in rural districts, the seizure of estates and the formation of Municipal and Regional Soviets. The whole movement seemed on the point of becoming a Soviet social revolution ; and that seemed to be the conscious aim of many of its supporters.

The tune was called by the Social-Communists, but even the other Trade Union organizations that were under other direction followed tactics that were not essentially different. Thus masses of people were to be seen taking possession of the land, singing hymns and waving red flags bearing the Soviet emblem, and other crowds led by priests and carrying church banners, or again, of ex-soldiers under the Tricolour.

The movement became tumultuous ; a never-

ending series of strikes, local and general, in every industry, including the public services, upset the economic life of the country; for futile and often local causes, sympathetic national strikes were proclaimed, suspending for days at a time the whole activity of the country and provoking intense irritation. "It is impossible to live like this" was the universal cry.

The Trade Union fight involved not only the employers and the State, but also all the people outside the Unions or outside the group of organizations that gave orders for the strike. Within the Trade Union camp a struggle for supremacy was also going on. The older Unions were chiefly concerned with conserving and completing their monopoly, not by means of a friendly understanding with Unions of more recent formation, but by fighting them and breaking them up. Conflicts occurred between the Unionists and strike-breakers, and serious fights between, for instance, Catholic and Socialist Trade Unionists; a little later Fascist Trade Unionists joined in the scuffle.

The Central Authority did nothing, and the rest of the population suffered.

"Similar phenomena occurred during the Middle Ages in the conflicts between those who divided the spoils of the Central Authority. So long as it continued to be powerful its competitors remained united by their common interests, or at least not seriously at variance. To the magnates under the Carolingians the most important thing was to escape from the power of the King or the Emperor; to our Trade Unions the most important thing is to withstand the authority of Parliament

and the interests of the remainder of the population ". (Pareto).

In certain localities and provinces the " red " Trade Unions, united in the Local or Regional Chamber of Labour (Trade Councils), virtually usurped the authority of the Central Power. They actually made themselves autonomous like the barons of the Middle Ages, hindering with impunity the execution of Government orders and the laws and regulations of the State.

To quote Pareto again: " If the State were obliged to annul its laws it might achieve their purpose, or at least appear to do so in another way, and thus save its face, but if the Trade Unions adopted the plan of taking no heed of the decisions of the State, the very foundation of its sovereignty would be destroyed in the eyes of all. The sympathetic strikes, as they were called, showed how, in direct opposition to the State, were rising up a league of small sovereignties, pretending to independence."

These new local powers, these " small sovereignties," aimed at controlling the entire life of a locality, regulating the economic relations between town and country, fixing the quality, quantity, and price of agricultural and industrial products, ordering boycotts and reprisals against anybody transgressing their orders, and imposing fines on those who tried to resist; they carried on, in fact, a bold, organized campaign to build up a new system of social relations.

One cannot say with Pareto that they " pretended to " independence; they simply ignored the Central Power. The movement, whose business

it ought to have been to adjust their relations with the State — the Socialist Movement — was absorbed in other problems. So that solutions of the difficulties between workmen and employers were arrived at locally, which were quite apart from the general system of social relations existing throughout the country. The Trade Unions lacked the breadth of vision required to generalize the new social order which was actually coming into existence locally, and they were incapable, by themselves, of fighting a successful battle with the State.

While the Trade Unions, in the guise of local "baronies," broke up territorially the Government of the State, the Trade Unions, organized by industry, made light of existing laws, as, for instance, those prohibiting strikes in the public services, especially in the railways, and entered into discussion on terms of equality with a Government incapable of applying the law, about disputes with the State itself or with private employers; such discussions, of course, tended to weaken the authority of the State at its very centre.

This two-fold "centrifugal" action of the Trade Unions not only menaced the position of the State, but aggravated immensely the disturbed conditions, economic, political, and spiritual throughout the country. The injury done was enormous; farmers, manufacturers, merchants were all in despair, and then, later on, when the Trade Union Movement began to decline, these losses being fresh in men's minds, proved a fruitful source of that stream of middle-class discontent, both from town and country, which so mightily augmented

the forces of Fascism, turning them against organized Labour, which was a constant menace, and against the State which had proved so ineffectual a protection.

The State, in short, loses prestige and, as time goes on, becomes more and more weak and ineffectual, the ties between it and the different classes of Society more and more loosened; unheeded by the proletariate or the possessing classes, it is abandoned even by the bourgeoisie, and at last, when they realize that the use of force is now in the hands of the proletariate rather than of the State, the military classes themselves begin to ignore it.

Meanwhile, the State merely marks time; it has no consecutive policy. It neither defends itself by means of the old laws nor transforms itself by enacting new ones for regulating the new situation.

The Trade Unions, on the other hand, were growing in power and prestige; they achieved for Labour better conditions and a higher social position, but, beyond a Sovietism, which is purely mythical, they were entirely without any definite conception of the new social State which they had promised to create or any organic policy for bringing the "Dictatorship of the Proletariate" into concrete existence.

The Government and Parliament took refuge, as best they could, in feeble measures. They sanctioned the "temporary" occupation of landed estates, requiring the occupiers to indemnify the proprietors, and they tried to make peace between the operatives who had taken possession of ships

or factories and the owners they had dispossessed. They seized any expedient for gaining time, without attempting any serious defence of private property or developing any definite policy of transition, such as a system of legal transfer of unused or ill-cultivated land, or of inefficiently managed industrial enterprises from the present owners to individuals or Guilds who would give a trustworthy guarantee that they would cultivate or manage them adequately.

We see, then, that neither State nor Trade Unions had been able to find a solution of the problem of a Trade Union State. From lack of capacity to control them, keep them in order and, above all, give them their due share of responsibility in the State, the Unions had been left outside the law. Thus every one of their Labour gains, everything they had accomplished, even though in itself of social utility, has been in fact an injury to Society because it was acquired not as a right, but as a privilege, seized by force.

Advantages so obtained, if made use of in the future, would be unrecognized by the law of the land. It was urgent either to enforce the old laws or to make new ones. The new ones might have given prestige to the Trade Unions and might have delivered them from the charge of aggression and high-handedness in the new duties that they have taken upon themselves.

It was the moment for Parliament to take action, but legislation moved too slowly and was entirely discredited; laws were at a discount; there were constant conflicts between the various authorities in the State as to their application.

"It is difficult for a civil population to get on without laws; they may be written, fixed by custom, or decided in any other way, but they must exist; there must be a theory behind every Society. The present condition of things, therefore, can only be transient when the old law is dying and the new one not yet born; but this new law is bound to come. If the Trade Unions conquer it will be a Trade Union law."

Writing this in 1920, Pareto believed that the Trade Unions *would* conquer, because he saw in them courage and energy, a spirit of endurance and a united front, while the forces opposed to them had not yet found their way under definite leadership.

It must be admitted that the State was much embarrassed. It was overweighted with debt. It did not dare to reduce expenditure, because by so doing it would have roused the opposition either of the capitalists, the Trade Unions, or the bureaucracy; it did not know where to turn for funds. Several tributes were voted which it was found impossible to levy; other fiscal schemes were discussed which had the effect of driving away the capital that it was proposed to tax. Capital refused flatly to bear any further taxation.

There was already an industrial crisis owing to the changed conditions in world-markets. The State really did not know which way to turn, and it had no longer any support in the country.

"It may be noted that, in general, the chief support of a Central Power is derived materially from the interests of the plutocracy, and spiritually

from the religion of the State, its theology, and its myths" (Pareto). Now, at the time we are speaking of, little support was to be found in the plutocracy which had centrifugal tendencies, being those who seemed to be in the ascendant; terrified, for instance, by the menace of total expropriation, the capitalists hastened to forestall it by offering to finance the industries that had been seized by the Trade Unions.

With regard to the religion of the State, on the other hand, it may be said to have been represented at that time by two diverse ideals, viz. Nationalist and Classical Socialist.

Now the power and influence of the Nationalist Party, pretty strong during the war, had been weakened by its disillusionments and, still more, by those of the Peace. The influence of Classical Socialism, too, which was always opposed to a Syndicalism that took up a position antagonistic to the whole social order, that failed to find a place for itself in the vast complex of social relations, was reduced to silence by the so-called revolutionary movement.

"If these two parties at that time did little to give support to the Central Power, a day may come when once more the tendency will be centripetal and these forces or, better still, the successors of these parties will do good work. It may well be that Classical Socialism will rise again, perhaps under a different form, when Syndicalism or some similar social order is on the decline. Classical Socialism aims at making itself master of the Central Power and controlling the whole economic life of the country; it opposes the

anarchy of capitalist production, but it is equally opposed to that of Syndicalist production" (Pareto).

Notwithstanding the spirit of revolution that was abroad, and the wide support which they would have had throughout the country from the community of hopes and interests ; notwithstanding the obvious fact that the old State was at its last gasp, the Trade Unions did not rise to the occasion, did not understand how to avail themselves of the enormous forces that were on their side.

The final test of their revolutionary capacities came under conditions that were fairly favourable, when, through an agitation for the revision of wages in the engineering and metal-working industries, the splendid movement of the occupation of the workshops sprang spontaneously into existence.

The occupation was decided on because the employers declared that it was impossible for them to carry on business under the new conditions demanded by the Trade Unions. The Unions maintained that it was possible and undertook to prove it.

The occupation extended over more than 600 workshops, involving some 500,000 operatives. The country was amazed at an attempt so gigantic ; people did not know how to take it and, as for the State, it adopted a *laissez-faire* attitude. The social revolution was believed to be imminent, not merely by the workers but by all other classes ; from hour to hour everyone waited for the "Dictatorship of the Proletariate" to be proclaimed.

The bourgeoisie, the ruling classes, were terri-

fied; they resigned themselves to their fate and even wished, many of them, that the revolution should break out at once, so that they might know the worst. Instead of this, nothing happened. The strike was called off. The workshops were given back to their owners. The Trade Unions accepted the proposal of the Government to bring in a Bill in Parliament which should give to the Trade Unions the means of controlling industry.

In face of the enormous difficulty and grave responsibility of continuing the occupation of the workshops, the Trade Unions reconsidered the position and renounced the mirage of revolution. Classical Socialism got the upper hand, and the Communists had to give way.

The representatives of Classical Socialism, the Reformists, were often accused—and still are—of having betrayed the proletariate and the revolution. Childish accusations. For one must, after all, take into consideration the calibre of the leaders. If there were men able to direct a Soviet State, they were to be found, in far greater numbers, among the Reformists than among the, so-called, revolutionaries.

The revolutionary impulse was checked, not by fear—it was perfectly well known that neither the Government nor anyone else was in a position to hinder the proletariate from seizing the power of the State—but by a realization of the terrible practical difficulties of the time.

The Russian ideal was being transformed before their eyes into the Russian spectre, under the pressure of unavoidable decisions.

They found themselves in the full swing of an

industrial crisis ; things were so bad that many manufacturers were only too glad to get rid of the burden of their factories and hand them over to the workers. The Trade Unions did not see how they could possibly carry on the factories and give employment to all the workers, satisfying all the demands which would infallibly be made on a Labour State.

The greatest difficulties that had beset the Soviet regimes of Russia and Hungary—attributed till now to pressure from foreign enemies—were revealed in a flash as intrinsic. There was every reason to fear that the proletariate would not show a spirit of devotion equal to the material sacrifices that would be required from it ; there was reason, too, to fear difficulties from foreign relations—from a boycott of Italy on the part of those countries on which she depended for the raw material of her industries.

It was not the State, the army, or the bourgeoisie that were to be feared, but the impossibility of carrying on business in a country surrounded by capitalist countries from whom nothing but hostility could be looked for.

These simple and obvious reasons for failure had behind them other, and more important, reasons that were less obvious and that were never really probed either at that time or afterwards. It was impossible for the social revolution to take place as a result of the occupation of the factories —or of any purely industrial cause—in a country that was predominantly agricultural. The revolutionary movement lost all its impetus in contending with the industrial difficulties with which it was

beset. What seemed impossible to a minority, viz. the industrial workers, was believed to be impossible for the whole country. A minority, the industrial workers, thought that the fate of the country depended on them just as a minority, consisting of capitalist employers, believed, before the war and while it lasted, that their control over the country was supreme, and acted on that belief. It never entered the head of any of the leaders of the Socialist Movement that the industrial difficulty was, to a great extent, artificial, as the very industries themselves were also to a large extent temporary and artificial. It never occurred to them for a moment that the right thing to do was to put an end to the industries or to reduce them at once to the minimum required for the supply of the country itself and transform them into industries dependent on home agriculture instead of on the supply of raw materials from abroad.

To set about at once intensifying agriculture, to shift great masses of workers from industries where they had not been long employed into rural districts, to create organic relations between agriculture and industry—such measures would have afforded the only possible solution because it corresponded with the actual economic conditions in the country.

If the final impulse to social revolution had come, not from the monopoly of Labour in industry but from the territorial "baronies" in the agricultural districts, there would have been a far better chance of success. For these "baronies," with the local authorities already well in hand and well-equipped through all kinds of Co-operative

Societies in full activity, with the means of controlling effectively the economic and political life of their districts, would have been able to organize production so as to absorb the demobilized industrial workers and to arrange that agriculture should produce those raw materials which were to be turned into finished goods by the newly organized industries.

These locally organized centres might, in fact, have given the key to the whole situation, with but a slight modification of their methods, for the fact that they were recognized by the new State would have invested them with formal authority.

One must remember that these " Red Baronies " were being formed before the war. The soil had been ploughed for the Soviet seed. The creation of local Soviets responded to a craving for self-government that was very real in Italy.

This explains the remarkable rapidity with which the Russian myth spread over Italy, and why local Soviets sprang up spontaneously with a definite programme of a Soviet Government for the country.

" The usual superficial critic has been anxious to find in this programme," writes Missiroli, a Monarchic-Liberal, " a reflection of Russian political administration, and has been unwilling to admit that the resemblance was accidental and explained nothing. Allow me to dissent from this usual view and to suggest instead a theory which serves not merely to explain the Italian Soviet Movement but also to defend it from the accusations most frequently brought against it. Faithful to my method of seeking in the emotions and even in

the errors of the masses the indication of a national need, a national urgency, often, too, of the fulfilment of such a need, I should like to call attention to certain reflections which seem to me to be of weight.

"The war had broken down, to a great extent, our administrative unity. Anyone who remembers the condition of Italian administration on the morrow of the armistice cannot be surprised at the above statement. We were up against this paradox: the national war, the first war that is to say where the whole Italian race fought in a single army, had served to dissolve that unity which the 'Risorgimento' had artificially created by means of the rigid discipline of a strict administration conceived and carried out by the politicians of the Right on the French model. We were faced, at the same moment, by a final crisis of the parliamentary system. From February 1919 Italy was governed by means of hundreds of 'decreti-leggi' (Orders in Council) which announced the death, like so many funeral epitaphs, of our representative system." [1]

At that time many writers called for a decentralization so complete that it would have been equivalent in fact to a real "federal regime," while others declared that the country was already in a state of civil war. The crisis went on unchecked. Claudio Treves, one of the Reformist leaders, was the only man who pointed out—in the *Critica Sociale*—a way of escape: the conquest of the communes. "The revolution in Italy has always

[1] Mario Missiroli: *Il Facismo e La Crisi Italiana* in the Library of Social Studies, Bologna, 1921.

been thought of in connection with the Labour communes. This is the glorious tradition of the 'Edicts of Justice' of Giano della Bella of immortal memory."[1]

The writer goes on to say that Socialist control over the communes, if it could be made effective, might be regarded as a means of solving, or, at any rate, as an attempt to solve, the problem of Italian administrative unity. There was talk at that time (1919–20) of Socialist collaboration in the Government, the idea being some kind of parliamentary coalition. What the politicians failed to see was that if the acquisition of power by Socialism was to be of any real value, it must not consist merely in the novelty of having a few Socialists in the Ministry, but in a radical transformation in the whole method of Government.

"At first, at all events, the Socialist experiment could take effect only in the communes and the provinces, and it would be necessary that the State should put them in a position to act for themselves as the circumstances of the time might require, allowing them much wider powers. War economy had gone far to solve economic problems, and the people now demanded political power; they were impatient for self-government. Owing to the fact that State and party have but little hold on the sentiment of the people in Italy, and are no longer vital, this desire associated itself with the communes.

"The transitory scaffolding of a unified State

[1] "Gli Ordinamenti di Guistizia" became law in 1293; they are the Magna Charta of Florence, giving to the Guilds the control over the State.

having fallen into ruin, the traditional historic divisions, the original geographical units, reappeared in their ancient simplicity. The commune came to be regarded as the unit of reconstruction. The *Soviet*—ugly foreign name for a good thing that is really Italian—aimed at reconciling the conflict between the ideals of class and party, a conflict which at that time paralysed any effective Socialist action, at putting an end, by means of direct popular government within the circle of the commune, to the irreconcilable dualism between the Legislature and the Executive."

"Was not Italian Socialism likely to adopt the character, the forms, and the methods that belonged to its environment, to the land of its birth?

"Just as the Soviet system in Russia answered to the needs and demands of the country as it emerged from Czarism and from the war, might not the same system find a place in the national tradition in Italy? Reformist critics objected that the Soviet was merely a reduplication of the 'Camera del Lavoro' (Trades Council) and of the 'Branch' of the Socialist Party; but they did not see that the direct government of the organized masses in the 'Camere del Lavoro' and in the 'Branches' would have been limited in scope, however tyrannical and uncompromising in character, while in the Soviet, although the 'Camere' and the 'Branches' might remain—at least at first—as central nuclei, they would participate in an authority, that would extend over the unorganized, over the whole body of workers by hand or by brain. The Soviet took its stand not on class but on the corporation, and regained

in the solidarity of the corporation the possibility of exercising control denied to economic and political organization by the very fact that such organization rests solely and exclusively on a basis of class. The Soviet scheme, with its decentralization and Regionalism, as formulated by the Socialist Party in 1919, may usefully be compared with the plans for regional organization proposed by Minghetti, who, in the Bill for the 'Administrative Government of Italy' (1861), elaborated a complete scheme for local autonomy—communal, provincial, and regional. 'But, does political unity necessarily imply administrative unity'? The crisis of the spring and summer of 1920 was a post-war crisis in point of time, but its origin is to be traced only in part to the war. It was, in truth, merely the pre-war crisis prolonged and intensified. The Socialists felt the added impetus like everybody else. Not to have seen that under that barbarous word was hidden one of the practicable methods of Italian administrative life, by no means alien to our ancient traditions; to have paid no heed to the fact that the working class was facing, for the first time, the problem of combining administrative decentralization with political unity—is by no means a good sign of the sagacity and capacity for government of a bourgeoisie that had lived through the war.

"It is impossible to ignore the problems; studied they must be, though it does not follow that they can be dealt with. It may seem paradoxical, but I cannot help saying that Massimalism itself, in the abstract formulation of programmes, might have been of use to a State which had really welcomed

the collaboration of the people. Am I mistaken? How did the Italian bourgeoisie reply to these confused and disconnected attempts at collaboration with the State? Its attitude towards Labour in general and the Socialist Party in particular was different at first from what it became later. At first there was every appearance of unwillingness to oppose organized Labour. They promised reform, gave grants, invited Socialist deputies to join the Government. Later on, when the workers—discarding all forms of collaboration with the bourgeoisie—took to direct action, the bourgeoisie were terrified. Bourgeois terror keeps pace with Massimalist unwisdom: it follows it as shadow follows substance ; a duel between madness and fear."[1]

[1] A. O. Olivetti: *La Fu Rivoluzione*, Casa Editrice delle Pagine Libere, Milan, 1921.

CHAPTER IV

THE SOCIALIST OPPORTUNITY

THE social revolution in Italy—of which the initiative came from the masses—was bound to be republican, federative, communalistic, decentralized and dependent on the Trade Unions.

But the initiative that sprang from an instinct deep-rooted in the history of the country was neither understood nor made use of; its significance was not grasped nor its possibilities developed. It was unheeded either by the middle class or by the great industrial Unions who failed entirely to make it what it might have been—the central idea, the predominating policy of Socialism, as a political movement.

The events of that period in Italy cannot be explained without some account of the action of political Socialism, intimately connected as it was with the struggles of the Trade Unions, and contributing, both of them, in no small degree to the breakdown of the State.

Immediately after the war there was an enormous influx of members into the Socialist Party, but, whereas the mass of new members joining the Trade Unions at that time was homogeneous—

composed of workers—the influx into the Socialist Party was extremely heterogeneous.[1]

The Unions were, as I have said, homogeneous, but the Socialist Party was very much the reverse. It was flooded by malcontents of all sorts, who had been sacrificed to the war, accustomed, many of them, to adventure and violence, without much culture or any political education. This restless multitude, quite unable to discriminate, and carried away by the myth of the Russian Revolution, overwhelmed the former Reformist majority in the Socialist Movement and entirely reversed what had been its centripetal tendency. For the former Socialist policy of a gradual permeation of the State was substituted tumultuous revolutionary action, which was opposed in vain by the Reformist leaders, just as a constructive policy had been swept away in the Trade Union Movement by a revolutionary wave.

"It must not be supposed, however, that the Reformists were retrograde, that they had failed to understand the new conditions. G. E. Modigliani, one of the Reformist leaders, has said very aptly: 'Italian Socialists must all have felt some sympathy with the introduction of Soviets, but not with Bolshevism.' 'Soviets' appeared to me

[1] The formation of professional associations for the superior grades of productive workers—managers, clerks, technicians—had at that time hardly begun; such people were by no means hostile to the mass of workers by hand; they were rather inclined towards them and very much disposed to leap the ditch and make common cause with them, abandoning the Capitalism that had exploited them; it was rather the mass of the workers that held back, little understanding the overwhelming importance of these elements in production and in any movement aiming at a change in the social order.

and to many others as an attempt of historical importance—destined to form a precedent—to bring the ranks of productive Labour into a more intimate relationship with the political constitution."

Bolshevism has been and is an entirely different thing both in fact and in conception; the idea behind it is to alter profoundly the social structure of a country by an elusive political dictatorship instead of guiding and encouraging its economic evolution under the laws that it knows and accepts.

On Sovietism, widely interpreted and brought into relation with the circumstances of Italy, might have been founded a programme and a method for an Italian revolution, but the uncompromising demand for an imitation of Russia put forward by the extremists (Communists and Massimalists) made the Socialistic programme chaotic and their methods utterly inefficient. Bolshevism has killed Sovietism, and brought into existence the misnamed abortion, Communism.

I call it an abortion because Socialism in Italy was always, as I have said, fundamentally a centripetal movement; although this, its real nature, was masked. Socialist policy was, in the eyes of the public, one of negation. As a matter of fact, however, it was really, as we see in looking back, a positive force, always exerting pressure on the Government in order to snatch concessions in favour of the proletariate and of the various bodies under Socialist control.

The Socialist tactics, between 1900 and 1914, were to say "No" to the Government in Parliament, "Yes" to the existing social order; the restraints imposed by it being very weak, and

the chance of profiting by it fairly large, so that Socialist institutions, both political and economic, were able to make a living at its expense.

"The progress of Socialism since 1900 was, to a great extent, the result—as it became also, in part, the cause—of Italy's growing economic prosperity ; but this progress could not be accomplished without the more or less tacit approval of the State.

"This amounted in effect to a political concession, a kind of relationship which the Socialists made the blunder of forgetting completely after the war, when, with no recollection of what they had gained politically by *collaboration with the State,* they took sides against it, over-estimating the revolutionary spirit of the populace, infatuated for the moment, and leaving the State to turn elsewhere in desperation and to seek support from other forces." [1]

Communist-Socialism, turning against the State, broke the traditions of Socialism and did much to injure those Socialist organizations which had business connections with the Government, or were constantly in need of its aid and defence.

It did weaken the State—as it intended to do—but it weakened, at the same time, its own essential, though cautious, ally. The break, however, was not entirely uncompromising ; it still gave help to the Government at critical moments, and received help from it, and, in return, the Government did not as yet enter into definite alliance with the enemies of Socialism ; there was still some probability that the Social-Communists might

[1] Amendola, ex-minister, in a speech which he made before the Fascisti came into power.

achieve their ends by means of the State, even after the time of the occupation of the factories, provided that they were willing to take sides openly with the Government and to accept responsibility for the functioning of those new organs which were needed and ought to have been introduced into the framework of the Government. Underhand collaboration with the State was no longer enough in face of the enormous interests involved.

The uncompromising attitude of the Social-Communists would have been intelligible and effective if their plan of weakening the State had been accompanied by an intelligent and methodical organization of the Socialist forces, as a State within the State, ready to replace the old State by the new as soon as the opportune moment should arrive. Under these circumstances, the uncompromising attitude would have been one feature of a vast policy. But no such policy existed. They were uncompromising in words but not in deeds. It was an inconsistency and a blunder.

They did not create the new State, though they did attempt to make an end of the old one, at the same time, however, making use of it to decide questions that arose ; not admitting that it could be used to construct its own successor. Such a situation could not go on for long.

The paralysis that befell both the State and the Socialist Party had, then, a two-fold cause: the failure to prepare seriously for the revolution, and the refusal to allow the existing State to make use of the political aspirations of the working classes and the Labour organizations that might have helped to transform and stabilize it.

Socialism at the critical moment was not a going concern. How could it be? It had been constructed for reform, and was now being used for revolution. Its breakdown put the whole social organism out of gear.

When the Socialists, believing that they could create a revolution out of nothing, gave up all constructive work and refused to do anything more for the Government, they made it impossible for the State to defend them or to incorporate the masses, and forced it to oppose them.

So far as any plan is to be found in the action of the Social-Communists, it seems to have been a plan for their own discomfiture.

The fatal deviation from their former line of conduct, their failure to become recognized partners of the State, is to be attributed to the absence of any clear apprehension of the situation in Italy and to their obsession with Russian ideas.

The Russian Revolution was not looked at from the Italian point of view; on the contrary, the Italian situation was interpreted from the Russian point of view. Just that part of the Russian example was selected for imitation which was least suitable, most specifically Russian, viz., the anti-democratic theory of the Dictatorship of the Proletariate, a theory that was tested in Italy in long and frequent rehearsals before the conquest of power was really attempted.

The idea of the Dictatorship of the Proletariate—of the proletariate alone—took possession of the Massimalist leaders and intoxicated the mass of their followers. It professed to give to a country

of an infinite variety of problems, institutions, and forms of production, a single and uniform solution ; they took no heed of the fact that Italy is not homogeneous and that no rigid revolutionary formula can be applied to her.

They thought that their victory would be easy and lasting because they believed that the bourgeoisie were effete, mentally exhausted, physically enfeebled, and functionally superseded. All they had to do was to break down what little power remained to the bourgeoisie, "already defeated and unresisting," and then to take its place. The result of this action was precisely the opposite: the abused and despised bourgeoisie, driven to bay, took out a new lease of existence, its class-consciousness, blurred by recent events, came to life again. It became stronger and stronger directly the Social-Communists showed signs of weakness.

It was a grave error to lump the bourgeoisie together as if they were politically and functionally homogeneous. It includes innumerable groups, great and small, with divergent interests, by no means all of them opposed to Socialism ; in politics many of them were democratic, and their Socialist sympathies, before the war, had favoured the rise of the proletariate. Now they held aloof from Socialism.

The proletariate took sides against the bourgeoisie without defining it, or, at least, defining it merely as "parasitical" ; they made no attempt to distinguish between the professional classes and the rest, nor to ascertain which professions and which categories of brain-workers would be

essential in the present phase of the movement towards Socialism, and even when Socialism became actually established.

Drunk with the Russian idea, the proletariate were certain that all they had to do was to leap into pure Communism, and that they could then govern and mould the Society of the future by means of the " Dictatorship " when " all men would be more or less equal."

In the multitude, such ignorance and simplicity were pardonable, but not in those who ought to have known better.

Clear-headed, single-minded men, men who knew exactly what was needed, who looked into the future from a functional point of view, who understood that the revolution could be effected only by means of elements and factors that were organically alive in the country—such men were not listened to.[1] Revolutionary propaganda had penetrated deeply into both town and country, feeding hopes of an immediate change. A joyful expectation of deliverance, the mystical enthusiasm of a new era, characterized that period. People did not look forward to the revolution as to a work of construction needing patience and wisdom, to be built up out of materials ready to hand, but as something easy enough to do, if only you had the power ; and at the same time they destroyed that very power, deluding themselves with the notion that they would be able to rebuild the State, though they would have to create all the materials for building it.

[1] I refer here chiefly to Turati (the Reformist leader) and his followers in the Trade Union Movement.

The Social-Communists identified themselves with the whole working class and with the revolution, refusing to believe that any other current of thought or of action in the country could be revolutionary in character. Twice, at least, during their dominance, there was an opportunity for a safe and swift solution of the revolutionary crisis in Italy; on the former occasion nothing came of it, because the immediate origin of the movement was Anarchist and Republican, rather than Communist, and the Social-Communists refused to have anything to do with it, a grave error, for though this movement had, at first, but a small following, yet it had, on the other hand, a revolutionary tradition that was very much alive, and it had leaders of great personal courage and ability—in both of which Social-Communism was, to a large extent, lacking; on the latter occasion the origin of the movement was industrial Trade Unionist, purely Communist, and the country would not support it.

By the obstinacy of its determination to follow the Russian model, Social-Communism has been prevented from becoming what it might have been, a revolutionary avalanche, carrying all before it, and has actually roused certain counter-currents in the country.

"The grave fault of the Italian Socialist Party, from an historical stand-point, is not so much that it did not make a revolution as that it prevented one from taking place, just at the moment when every condition was favourable for the one only form of revolution that could have been possible and useful. The party proclaimed itself as revo-

lutionary, but as a matter of fact it acted as a conservative force."[1]

The Italian Social-Communists failed to fathom the Russian Revolution, missing some of its most important features, especially the deep consideration which was given to national problems, the self-determination of races. The attention paid to this question shows how highly national principles and national sentiments were valued by the makers of the revolution, because they recognized that such sentiments constituted a living force. The Russian Revolution was, and is, a mighty engine of social reconstruction, which overthrew the former regime because it prevented any kind of reform. Conditions in Italy were entirely different.

We have pointed out already how Social-Communism showed no consideration whatever for national sentiments and ideals. Nothing could have proved more completely the lack of historic sense among the Social-Communists than the way in which they abandoned neutrality after the war and took up an attitude of hostility both to the war and the victory. Such a campaign was neither necessary nor opportune. The country was tired of the war, did not want to discuss it any more, and had, to a great extent, forgotten the Socialist "defeatism." What it wanted now from Socialism was to help to get things straight in the after-war muddle. Nobody expected Socialism to go back on and renounce its anti-war attitude and opinions, but there was no point in making a dead set against national ideals.

[1] Oliviero Zuccarini (a Republican) in the *Critica Politica*, February 1921.

Since the Russian Revolution was brought about by military defeat, and since Italy had not been defeated in the war, it was necessary, according to the Social-Communists, to engineer a "peace-defeat," so as to provide a situation favourable for the breaking out of revolution. By making light of victory and showing it to be valueless, a spirit of Socialist revolt was to be generated. Absurd notion! They did generate a revolt, but it was against themselves. The discussion about the war and its results was carried on, not in an atmosphere of theoretical discussion which could be conducted serenely, but amidst the impressionable populace; and it took an offensive form against any manifestation of national sentiment.

Soldiers, ex-soldiers, and officials were attacked with abuse, and often even physically maltreated; many casualties occurred; some soldiers and civilians were killed, and this roused hostility and resentment. The civil war was beginning. The Social-Communists believed that all the people who took part in manifestations of national sentiment were induced to do so by bribes and coercion: They would not admit that others were acting in good faith, though they themselves were, many of them, idealists and enthusiasts. They forgot that there were many volunteers in the war who deliberately offered their own lives for an idea, the Nation, and that these men would certainly not have given in to a Social-Communist domination. Political passion is blind. They were fatal errors, to be imitated later on by the other side.[1]

[1] People are always discussing as to who began these acts of violence; it is impossible to say. Post-war violence had its origin

So it happened that the anti-Socialist ranks received a continuous influx of those who had suffered constraint and irritation. This misapprehension of the forces and sentiments of the country, forces and sentiments that would be either friendly or unfriendly to Socialism, according to its tactics and behaviour—was accompanied by a misunderstanding of its own followers. The Socialists failed to realize that the war, by mobilizing the whole industrial and agricultural working class, and especially the young people, has created a new mass-psychology with which everybody, but especially the Labour movements, had to reckon. They seem to have thought that the war had made no change in the mentality and training of the people, forgetting entirely that the great majority of the ex-soldiers had never had a Socialist education, that the first training they got and the first spirit they absorbed was the military training and spirit, mellowed somewhat, by common suffering and fellowship.

The Socialists, underrating entirely the psychological influences of the war, and of the idea of "the Nation," offended the sentiment of the return-

in war violence and cannot be looked on as an entirely separate thing. Social-Communist violence is not merely a reaction against Interventionist violence, nor the latter against the former. It was a vicious circle. Thus there were on both sides thousands of victims, true martyrs; often, too, other parties among the extremists were involved—the Republican and the Popular Parties. The thing is going on still, though in a lesser degree because the Government and the Fascist authorities no longer permit acts of violence on the part of their own troops, nor reprisals from their opponents. Those who disobey these orders are expelled from the Fascist ranks and are dealt with by the civil and military tribunals.

ing soldiers by ridiculing anybody that showed any national feeling, and attacking everything that had national significance. In short, they failed entirely to understand that the returning soldiers felt themselves to be creators of victory, creators and defenders of the Nation, and that what they demanded in recognition of their services was its regeneration—the building up of a new social order on national lines. They were very far from idealizing the war and its makers; they were, indeed, the most competent critics of its leaders and its profiteers, and were convinced of its futility and of the need for a social change that would make war impossible. They were ready to do their utmost for this social change provided that what they considered—rightly or wrongly—the spiritual and national values of the war and victory were not undermined.

This wave of national feeling, of responsibility for the welfare of the Nation, was entirely lost upon the Socialists, who might so easily have turned it to the advantage of their movement.

Notwithstanding their persistence, however, in their anti-national attitude, the success of the Russian Revolution gave them a new lease of life. By preaching it as an example and an ideal, and promising to reproduce it in Italy, they regained their prestige with the masses.

Meanwhile the ex-soldiers were fast becoming disillusioned, for the ruling classes had failed entirely to make good their war-time promises; no emergency work had been provided for them, no land given them, nor any sufficient means for starting life anew. Stimulated by the hope of an

impending social revolution, they forgot their grudge against the Socialists, and joined the Socialist political and Trade Union Movements in great numbers, or founded Co-operatives and Trade Unions of their own, determined to help forward the revolution. Very few of the ex-soldiers, at that time, joined the Fascist ranks.

The Social-Communists, however, failed to make use of the military capacity of their new adherents, just as they failed to appreciate their thoughts and feelings about the country they had been fighting for. If the social revolution had been seriously decided upon and prepared for, the Social-Communists ought to have seen that it was from the ranks of the ex-soldiers and ex-officers that the military staff and the van-guard of the revolution must come. There were certainly very few men among the older groups of Socialists who were fitted for such posts either by temperament or military training, nor were the mass of their followers prepared for violence. The few members of the party, moreover, who might have directed a military revolution had, already, left it.

Thus the movement that preached revolution and violence was by no means prepared to put it in practice: an equivocal situation that was bound to bring failure. Social-Communist violence showed itself in many episodes that were merely criminal; it was impotent as a rebellion, because it was sporadic and without method; a thing of words rather than deeds, and quite unorganized, it could have no national objective and direction. It only irritated, and sometimes frightened its enemies, but it did not subdue them.

It lacked leadership. On several occasions, for days together, the rank and file took control, but when spontaneous action of this kind was beginning to take effect it was snuffed out by the leaders, while when the leaders were ready to act they could not get a following.

In the summer of 1919, for instance, the political struggle became very threatening; the mass of the people rebelled against high prices, invaded the shops, and distributed the goods through its own organizations, taking entire control of the situation in small places as well as in the big cities; the soldiers sympathized with the people, and so did the vast majority of the citizens. In several localities Soviet forms of local government came into existence. But there was no one to co-ordinate the movement, to transform these new forms of local effort at revolt which had arisen spontaneously, into a true revolutionary movement on a national scale.

A central revolutionary authority and a General Staff was entirely lacking.

Certain attempts were made to constitute a "red army," but they were a melancholy parody of the Russian model, and nothing was dóne towards preparing for an effective armed resistance—not to speak of an armed insurrection of the proletariate.

The Socialists definitely refused to enter into any alliance with the "arditi del popolo," bands of ex-soldiers and ex-officers, non-Communists, which formed themselves spontaneously for the defence of the common people, when the Fascisti first began their attacks.

The violence of the proletariate, which, if drilled

and organized militarily, might really have effected the desired reversal of the social order, ran to waste in creating disturbances that roused only hatred and a sense of injury, and served to justify a counter-revolutionary armed force as a necessary defence from the armed revolutionaries.

Notwithstanding all this, political Socialism went on increasing enormously with the uninterrupted increase of the Trade Union Movement. In November 1919, one hundred and fifty-six Socialist deputies were elected to Parliament, which constituted a controlling influence there; they did, indeed, succeed in paralysing any important legislative work. In the same year, at the Socialist Congress at Bologna, the social revolution was announced as the immediate programme and an absolutely uncompromising opposition to the Government.

Thus the legal, parliamentary method of social reconstruction was entirely set aside, while the method of revolution was still in the clouds.

The Socialists in Parliament, although the majority of them were really Reformist, were not permitted by their party discipline to press for the legislation of the proletarian conquests as a commencement of social reconstruction; worse still, their numerical strength in Parliament actually hindered reform, for without Socialist support no Government could have a strong enough majority to carry out a radical programme of social reform.

At the same time, the mass of the people remained entirely unprepared, either technically or militarily, for revolution. No preparatory measures of any kind were taken.

This was the state of things at the time of the occupation of the factories. Social-Communism was obliged to give way; it lost the initiative of attack.[1]

It was the Reformist leaders who hindered the revolutionary experiment, and it was they who pointed out the constitutional road and the ideal of national reconstruction—the making of a new Italy—"Rifare l'Italia"—was their slogan; and it was therefore commonly thought that Classical Socialism would come into its own again, gaining power and the direction of affairs in collaboration with the Government.

The mass of the people were disillusioned, disoriented, discouraged; they had themselves definitely demobilized the revolution, and were turning their thoughts elsewhere; moreover, the industrial crisis began to make itself increasingly felt, and the Fascisti were becoming increasingly active.

But the Massimalist and Communist leaders went on obstinately in the old way, learning nothing either from their own experience in Italy nor from the significant changes of Communist policy in Russia.

[1] The editor of *Avanti*, at the Congress of the Italian Socialist Party, after its refusal to amalgamate with the Communist Party (April 17, 1923) made the following significant statement:

"A revolutionary party ought to be ahead of all movements. It must not stand still. If in 1919 and 1920 we had not tried to transplant Sovietism into Italy, if we had not fostered the illusion of a revolution which, from one day to another, was to solve all problems, if we had not laughed at the idea of summoning an Assembly, if we had not scorned to proclaim a republic, the Italian proletariate would have had before them to-day very different possibilities of action."

The Socialists were not really anxious to be in power ; they were given the opportunity again and again of assuming the responsibility of government ; the bourgeois democracy would have been quite content with a few of the technical posts in the Ministry.

The demand for industrial control, which was deeply implanted in the Italian working classes at the time of the occupation of the factories, and has been so ever since, but which, before that time, was almost unknown, might have become the first outpost of victory.

They might have brought in social legislation —not of the Whitley Council type—but something much more substantial.

The following was the pronouncement at that time of the Confederation of Labour, the largest Trade Union organization in the country:

"It should be made clear to the workers that the control will be two-fold. The first part, that which concerns the control to be fixed by law— allows complete control over the business. The General Confederation of Labour will draw up a Bill, according to which the said control will begin in each individual business, and will permit the workers' representatives to know all financial and technical details concerning the conduct of the industry, so that it will no longer be possible to hide the actual condition of the industry or to defraud either workers or consumers, by unbridled speculation.

"We shall then have a more efficient means of controlling each branch of industry, which will allow us to have at our disposition all the factors

which go to make a branch of industry flourishing and prosperous, or to put an end to it. In this way the Trade Unions will be in a position to control speculative experiments and all actions that conduce to the repetition of industrial crises: they will be able to give an opinion as to the duties levied, to advise as to the most favourable markets, and as to the products best adapted for those markets; they will be enabled to get information from international reports as to the exchange of raw materials and manufactures, and will be provided with all that information on which the planning of collective production in the future should be based and which is to-day entirely lacking.

"The second kind of control will be exercised through workshop representatives, who will have the right of intervention with regard to Trade Union regulations and to appointments and dismissals, etc.

"Comrades must be able to see that new relations of this kind constitute a real revolution in the workshop by means of which the employer loses those rights of autocratic control which he has exercised up to the present."

There were also two other Bills before Parliament of still greater importance, not much talked about abroad because their purport would hardly be understood; one of them has in view the creation of what might be called a Labour Parliament for the purpose of legislating on economic questions connected with capitalist enterprise, the other was concerned with the transformation into Co-operative Societies of private industrial and agricultural enterprises and public services.

"This last Act will be the crowning touch to the work of reforming the State in social matters. We desire, by its means, to secure the right of the workers in any business undertaking to form themselves into a Co-operative Society for the purpose of purchasing or renting the business, which would then no longer be conducted on a wage basis. Such management should be absolutely free. A body of workmen engaged in the business, who considered that they were capable of carrying it on, and had not the means to do so, would be enabled to gain possession of it, or to lease it, on payment by instalment to the proprietor ; provision being made to prevent such Co-operators from transforming themselves into proprietors of a private business. In every way, the principle of the economic sovereignty of the State would be upheld, and its right to participate in the profits of Co-operative enterprises as established under this regime." [1]

Under this law the State would have been obliged to subsidize largely "The National Institute of Credit for Co-operative Societies" (a semi-State Bank), in order that it might be able to carry out the provisions of the law.

These three laws, especially the one with reference to the conversion of private and State industries into Co-operatives, answered to the innate and widely diffused tendency towards the formation of Guilds in Italy, and greatly encouraged it.[1]

[1] From a speech by the minister, Labriola, who introduced this Bill in the Chamber of Deputies, November 22, 1920.

[2] See *Guilds and Co-operatives in Italy*, Labour Publishing Co. London, 1923, and my article "Guild Tendencies in Italy," *International Labour Review*, May 1923.

But the "revolutionaries" still dominated the political complex of the working class and any participation by Socialism in the Government was forbidden ; thus the Government was left in the hands of the enemies of the proletariate, while the proletarian organizations, the Guilds especially —which during recent years had increased and multiplied—claimed assistance from the State, which had assigned hundreds and hundreds of millions for financing the Socialist programme in a Bill for which the Socialist Party refused to vote.

This was an absurd situation which could not last.

Disastrous results soon followed. The Socialists, being debarred from entering the Government or from joining other working-class parties, such as the "Popular Catholic Party" which were not hostile to the above-named reforms, were left in the lurch, and the bourgeoisie, industrialists, and landowners began to breathe again and to resist.

To begin with, they started obstructing the law for Trade Union control which they had already officially accepted in a moment when things looked very grave ; now that the situation in the country had changed so much, and there was hope that the "Fasci di combattimento" might get the upper hand over the proletariate, they would have nothing more to do with it.

Olivetti, M.P., who represented the "Federation of Italian Industries" in the committee appointed to discuss the law, declared that Trade Union control was "not acceptable to industrialists because it is incompatible with the principles of economy and the collective necessities of produc-

tion. The experiment of control could be accepted by the industrialists only if it represented a collaboration between the various elements of production."

The workers' representatives have maintained the suitability and usefulness of a control from which they have, so they say, done their best to remove the character and purpose which was attributed to it when the demand for it roused the Trade Unions to excitement and agitation. They have come to declare at last that they see nothing impossible in a collaboration between workers and employers. They have even said that there are moments in the struggle when a truce is necessary, and that we have reached one of these moments to-day.

This climb-down of the workers' representatives was brought about by the fact that outside Parliament the Social-Communist position was becoming sensibly weaker.

In January 1921 the Communists broke off from the Socialists and formed a new party. The united proletarian front was broken up. In this split the wedge of reaction easily found a hold. It was thought that after the separation Socialism would go back to its former classical ways, but this is not what happened. The so-called Massimalists, the uncompromising section, still dominated the party.

Thus we come to the elections of October 1921, administrative, municipal, and provincial, which showed some sign already of a re-awakening of the bourgeois class, but brought, nevertheless, a splendid victory for Socialism. This withdrew the

attention of the country for the moment from what was really happening. There was still a last chance for Socialism.

There was hope that with the conquest of about 2,500 communes, out of about 8,000, many of them of great importance, with strong minorities in almost all the other communes, with 25 provincial administrations and 156 parliamentary representatives—with this immense power distributed all over the country, Socialism would really do something.

With such a force behind it, Socialism might have developed a notable programme of action and cut at the roots of the power of the bourgeoisie. They did neither. They made no attempt to solve, by means of the communes, their problem of political psychology, nor to make use of the flood of revolutionary feeling and apply it to constructive work, to realizing a little of the Socialism they preached so furiously.

"The truth is the Socialists conquered the communes without having a positive programme of any kind, but simply in order to make use of them for waging the class war in their own fashion. For them it was more important not to fly the national flag on a feast day than to square the balance sheet of a charity."[1]

As they did not form part of the Government, the Socialists were not able to obtain from the State the means of putting the communal finances on a sound basis, exhausted as they were by the war.[2] Where they attempted to do this locally

[1] Pan *Il Fascismo*, Libreria Politica Moderna, Rome, 1922.

[2] A typical case was that of the commune of Milan: under

by augmenting the communal taxes they, of course, roused local opposition from those who would have to pay. The "anti-rates strike," engineered by the "Ratepayers League"—under the patronage of the Fascist Movement, which was by this time becoming more widely spread—became a new means of fighting Socialism.

The Socialist communal victories were not organized and consolidated as they might have been by a little timely initiative. They looked on the commune merely as a conquered outpost from which to proceed to revolution. Things that ought to have been done at once, urgently needed by the people, were put off till the morrow of the revolution.

Just as it was impossible, from the lack of Socialist participation in the Government, to give legal sanction, lasting and indubitable, to the occupation of the factories, the land, and the ships, so the conquest of the communes could lead to nothing that was positive and enduring.

Socialist communes, without any Socialist backing in the Central Government, became centrifugal in effect. It was, indeed, round the communes administered by Socialists or Communists (later on, too, round those that were under the control of the "Popular" or "Republican" Parties), that the fiercest struggles were renewed, which seemed to have died down since the failure of the occupation of the factories.

the Socialist (and later the Social-Communist) administration, although it was one of the best administered of the Italian communes, the Government refused to grant a loan; directly the commune passed under bourgeois administration the money was forthcoming.

The Socialist communes offended national sentiment, failed to respect the opinion of the minority in the administration and, above all, infringed big interests.[1]

In fact, " in the communes the Socialists did not chatter as they do in Parliament, but, *within the limits permitted by the law*, made actual expropriations.

" Thus it happened that the land-holding and middle classes, excluded from the government of the commune, and threatened with the loss of their property, turned to Fascism for some sort of defence. Henceforth the communal struggle proceeded side by side and combined with the agrarian. It was necessary to strike at the communes and the electoral power of the communes. The Socialist administrators came largely from the ranks of Trade Union and Co-operative organizers ; war to the death, then, against them and against the Trade Unions and Co-operatives " (Pan).

Thus Fascism was growing stronger; from an urban movement it was becoming rural as well and, finally, national.

[1] In a meeting of Socialist administrators which was held after the election it was decided, among other things of little importance, " not to fly the national flag on Italian official holidays and to fly the red flag on days of popular rejoicing," and " not to appoint representatives of the minority (in opposition) on the Statutory Committees."

CHAPTER V

FASCISM INTERVENES

ALL along the line, in every field of action, was shown the incapacity of the Social-Communists to give expression to any definitely thought-out policy, to find a key to the situation, which was one of the utmost urgency. There was a crying need for the reconstruction of finance, and of the authority of the State, and for return to stable conditions of production. The country was beginning to feel an acute longing to break a tension which had become intolerable; a longing for action, for defence, for a "Strong State."

"Nobody can remain standing on tiptoe. After a little time disorder subsides and some strong man leads the inevitable reaction."[1]

The "strong man," in this case, was Mussolini; he, with his small group of followers, formed the pivot on which reaction rested.

The "Fasci di Combattimento" had certainly no idea that they could even be considered as the personification of reaction when in March 1919, at their first meeting, they issued their first programme, which had nothing whatever in it that was reactionary.

[1] A.E., *The National Being*, p. 80.

That programme has for its basis the recognition that the war was a war of revolution. It was summed up under four chief headings dealing with political, social, military, and financial problems.

As regards the political problems, besides the demand for proportional representation and suffrage for women, they asked for a lowering of the minimum age for electors and deputies and, above all, the abolition of the Senate; the summoning of a National Assembly to last three years, which would have, as its first task, to regularize the Constitution; the formation of occupational National Councils—for labour, industry, transport, social hygiene, communication, etc.—elected by the members of the trade or profession, with legislative rights and with power to elect a Commissary-General with ministerial power.

As regards social problems, besides the solution of several immediate problems, such as the systematization of railways, modification in the law regarding sickness and old age insurance, they called for: the passing of a law to confirm a legal eight-hour day for all workers and a minimum wage for all industrial operatives and agricultural labourers; the participation of Labour representatives in the technical management of industry (workers' control), and that the carrying on of industry and public services should be entrusted to such Labour organizations as were capable of undertaking them and worthy of the trust.

With regard to military questions, they asked for: the institution of a national militia with a short period of instruction and exclusively for defence; the nationalization of all factories for

arms and explosives ; a national foreign policy, whose aim should be to raise the position of Italy in the peaceful competition of civilized nations.

Lastly, with regard to finance, they made three demands : a heavy special tax on capital of a progressive nature, which would take the form of a true, though partial, expropriation of wealth; the sequestration of the possessions of religious bodies, and the abolition of episcopal revenues, which constitutes an enormous national liability and a privilege confined to a few; the revision of war contracts and the sequestration of 85 per cent. of war profits.

We have already enumerated the sources from which the first Fasci were formed; they were certainly not sufficiently numerous, nor was their programme sufficiently clear and definite for them to take their place as a political party. They did, nevertheless, take part in the Milan political elections (November 1919), receiving a few thousand votes for the candidature of Mussolini. From this negligible result, it was taken for granted by many people that Fascism was practically at an end. The Socialists especially laughed at and ignored them—did not take them seriously.

The Fasci at that time were not finding much sympathy even among the organizations of the ex-combatants, and were of little importance in the life of the country, not venturing to measure themselves openly against the Social-Communists or Trade Unionists. It was only with the enterprise of Fiume that they entered the arena of

national politics. They assisted in that enterprise, and some, though not all, of the Legionaries (d'Annunzio's troops), when they returned to Italy, joined the Fasci and became the backbone of the military forces of Fascism. The main body of the Fiume Movement, especially d'Annunzio's immediate supporters, stood aside because Fascism had not supported the Fiume enterprise right on to the end as they had promised.

The reinforcement of Fascism by these restless and rebellious elements coincided, as we pointed out in the last chapter, with the disorientation of the rank and file, and the leaders of Labour, and with the returning courage of the middle classes. Fascism, therefore, began to assume a military aspect, and to adopt middle-class ideals. When they found the working class and its leaders uncompromisingly hostile to the social side of their programme, they naturally began to emphasize its national side.

The energetic affirmation of Nationalist principles brought to Fascism an influx of intellectuals, professionals, small employees, and many members of the lower middle class, besides a multitude of young men, ex-officers, and students ; these people believed whole-heartedly in the patriotic mission of Fascism, in the purification of civil life and the strengthening of the moral fibre of the Nation. The old idea of "the Nation" proved once more to be an effective stimulus to action, disinterested action for the "Nation's salvation."

To such men violence was only a means of attaining to a better condition of Society; in Fascism they saw a political and ethical sig-

nificance which transcended the happenings of the moment, and appeared as a permanent principle, as a re-birth of morality and civil life.

This theoretical Fascism, which in the minds of its exponents and followers was to form a new and beneficent element in public life, was overridden, however, by the crowd who joined Fascism or backed it from sheer personal or class interest.

In this connection it is interesting to read some remarks in *Avanti* (the organ of the Socialist Party) for August 1921: "Fascism started, it appears, as a nucleus for the reconstruction of national political life which had been betrayed by revolutionaries and Bolshevists; it aimed at bringing order in place of disorder. The young men of the middle classes took upon themselves voluntarily the task of establishing order in the affairs of the State by the severest and most determined measures, although they might have to break the law in the process.

"That which the Government was powerless to accomplish, bound as it was by political traditions, Fascism, free and unprejudiced, did for it."

This force, chosen by Fate because it alone was, at the moment, organized and ready for action, served as a rallying-point for all those who had been disillusioned or injured by the Social-Communists, or by the inability of the State to defend its citizens from them, as well as for the crowd which is always athirst for adventure.

These accessions to its ranks impressed on Fascism a reactionary character, because they had either lost their occupation through the war or

were unable to settle down, or, in short, being somehow on the rocks, they were trying to improve their fortune by plunging into the political struggle. The methodical violence of Fascism began just at the moment when the opposition of new ideas was transformed into an opposition of interests by the new adherents who brought their own interests into the movement. Fascism, in its early days, was diluted and contaminated, just as Classical Socialism was, by inflation.

Fascism did not lack opportunities for justifying its acts of violence in public opinion, born, as it was, at a time of extreme tension when hatred and passion were rife.

An important date marking the conversion of Fascism to pitiless violence is November 21, 1920: on that day the new Municipal Council of Bologna was to assemble for an official opening, the majority being Social-Communist; but a fierce and bloody fight broke out in the Municipal Palace and outside it, in which there fell, among other victims, an ex-officer, a man of great intelligence, universally esteemed for his disinterested patriotism and heroic conduct during the war. A reaction arose immediately, which spread from Bologna, throughout the country, and culminated with the advent of a Fascist Government.

"Fascism represents the sortie of a besieged army" (Missiroli). Agrarian Fascism began to assert itself. It became from this moment the pitiless counter-revolution to a revolution manquée. Civil war, hitherto believed to be impossible in Italy, convulsed the country. The pace became headlong. Many groups that had formerly swelled

the ranks of the Socialists or Communists, joined the Fascisti, not only because they loved violence and were without political training, but also because they wanted to have a hand in what was going on, and saw no prospect of realizing their Communist hopes.

The middle class, in town and country, understanding the peril they had just escaped and the weakness of the Social-Communists, rushed to Fascism in the hope of defence and of finding themselves at last on the winning side. The whole of the middle class did not embrace Fascism, but it was this stream of enthusiastic sympathy which rendered possible the line of action which Fascism now embarked on, just as it had been a stream of sympathy with Socialism that had encouraged the Socialist development before the war. These sympathizers with Fascism, it was, who, for the sake of economic interests, subsidized Fascism as the defender of "the liberty of Labour," and of acquired wealth, against the economic dictatorship of the organized working class.

"This is the meaning of this 'filo-fascismo,' this atmosphere of favour and sympathy, and of more substantial assistance which the middle classes —industrial and rural, masonic and clerical—are ready to bestow on Fascism, not so much for the sake of any political creed that it stands for as the atmosphere of protection and gallant reassurance that it brings to them." [1]

The sons of the "filo-fascisti," of the big tradesmen and manufacturers in the towns, of the

[1] Don Luigi Sturzo, leader of the "Partito Popolare" (Catholic), in an interview with the *Secolo*, August 19, 1922.

big land-owners and farmers in the country, were eager to serve in the Fascist ranks.

In the country, however, the feeling was not so strong; the Agrarians were ready to defend themselves, but their patriotism was rather a cloak for the defence of individual and local interests.

But it is noteworthy that in the towns, the salaried and professional classes, and those allied to them, began to turn towards Fascism, moved thereto by a combination of feeling for the country and for their own interests, because their standard of living was menaced by any ascendancy of the lower class, who would be unwilling to recognize their intellectual superiority and the importance of their functions; in the country, on the other hand, side by side with the big farmers and land-owners, there were many classes who sympathized with Fascism—small tenants, smallholders, peasants desiring to become smallholders, shopkeepers, and so forth, in short, the lower middle class. Many of the individuals belonging to these various classes were, of course, people who had raised themselves from an inferior position by their own exertions, and had not yet attained to a very settled position, socially or politically. Till then, they had oscillated between one movement and another, without belonging definitely to any party or developing any conscious class feeling.

A whole new stratum of the population, till now almost inarticulate, woke up to a kind of class—or functional—consciousness and took its place in contradistinction on the one side to the proletariate, on the other to the upper bourgeoisie. This is a most important and, at the same time, most unfore-

seen result of Fascism and one that may have, in the future, a great influence on the course of events in Italy.

The middle classes, then, either joined the Fascist Movement, or gave it their warm approval, while the politicians tried to get the Socialists to join the Government and hoped for the support of the working class by means of their influence. But the Socialists would not agree to work with the Government, and wasted their time in discussions and recriminations among themselves, getting nothing done; leaving the Government powerless to oppose Fascism, which was beginning to figure as a rival to the State.

The Fascist counter-offensive assumed unheard-of forms and proportions; it met with but little opposition, for the Russian myth was already dying out—the kind of mystic faith which had moved and influenced the mass of people was melting away. The movement against "Bolshevism" degenerated into a fight against every kind of Socialism, even that of the Reformists, and against all that they had accomplished during thirty years of patient labour. The Fascists wanted to break the Labour monopoly, to abolish the great Labour Trust that had been built up, to restore "Free Trade" in Labour, unlimited competition in its purchase and sale; their aim, in short, was to restore, especially in the country, the slavery of the working class. In this respect they were on the same lines as the professors of political economy and the journalists who never combated monopoly in raw materials, and in all kinds of food, held by the capitalists to the injury of the whole country, but furbished

up the most absurd theories to fight the monopoly of Labour.

They organized punitive expeditions in the villages; they destroyed the local branch offices of the Socialist Party, of the Trade Unions, and the Co-operatives.

Formed now into armed bodies, under military discipline, with officers in command, they harried the Labour organizations, driving their members with fire and sword, and met with no serious resistance either from State or proletariate.

Most of the people surrendered at once, and when they did try to defend themselves, the defence was poor and unorganized, from their entire lack of military training and equipment, and above all of leadership; their attempts at defensive measures —little more than isolated outbursts of insurrection or vendetta—served only as a pretext for Fascist reprisals quite disproportionately fierce.

Violence—with method—was the secret of Fascist success. Fascism made use of its power, and still more of the sympathy it met with, to put in practice a wide and comprehensive programme of violence. It was even then beginning to usurp the authority of the State, to grasp at Government; it behaved as if it were in control of the State even while it was anti-State.

Fascism subdued the proletariate by military action; each position conquered was immediately reinforced and made to serve as a base for further action. The conduct of affairs was consistent and wisely directed; there was obviously a General Staff in command. Definitely opposed to Labour monopoly, they attacked it at its most vulnerable

points, and succeeded in breaking it down, but they did not stop there : they managed to impose their own views on the masses of workers whom they had detached from the old organizations and to re-absorb them into the Trade Unions which they were themselves rapidly forming, thus ousting the former leaders and taking their place ; they broke up, too, the local " baronies," as we have called them, took possession of the communes and the provinces, and forced the Socialist administrators to resign.

They acted as a centrifugal (i.e. decentralizing) force, but they were linked together throughout the country as an organized power; where they destroyed, they made good.

The Social-Communists, from the first, made Rome their objective, aiming at the conquest of the Central Power and afterwards, through it, of the country; the Fascisti, on the other hand, conquered the country first, and Rome fell into their hands afterwards like a ripe fruit.

The Social-Communist method roused the country to oppose them and they lost their position; the Fascist method took advantage of the turn of popular feeling against the Social-Communists and came out victorious. The existence of an armed militia was quite unconstitutional. It had, however, been equipped largely, on the quiet, from the regular army, trusting to the precedent of Fiume. No one any longer troubled much about the law. The State itself was the chief delinquent, pretending to notice nothing. The whole spirit of the country had undergone a change. Blind hatred became the dominant force. Laws, institutions, functions, classes, everything in fact, was in the melting-pot.

The Government, which gave way to the high-handed behaviour of the Fascisti just as it had before given way to the tremendous pressure exerted by the proletariate at the time of the occupation of the factories, dissolved Parliament in the hope that, owing to the changed conditions in the country, a new Parliament would have more ability and more authority, and might be able to give a lead to the Government in establishing some sort of social equilibrium.[1]

In the election of May 15, 1921, Socialism lost a few seats, but this was because Fascist violence prevented the free exercise of the suffrage rather than that the number of Socialist electors had diminished. In several constituences, Socialists abstained from voting, being sure that the Government was not strong enough to guarantee free voting.

The Fascisti took part in the election, but they did not yet constitute a proper political party.

[1] Parliament was not able to do anything because the two large parliamentary groups—the Socialist and the Popular Parties, who between them held the majority of the House—were paralysed and exhausted by their internal differences and quarrels; the extremists in the Socialist group did not allow the Reformists to do anything, and vice versa; the same thing happened in the Popular Party. This entirely prevented the formation of any single consistent policy in Parliament. For instance, there was talk, on several occasions, of a coalition between the two parties, each of which had a very large following in the country, and which made many demands that were practically identical, so that they might, by working together, have obtained the recognition by the State and inclusion within it of Labour organizations both rural and industrial. But the extremist Socialists on the one side and the moderates of the Popular Party on the other prevented collaboration, so that they never came to an understanding in Parliament, and the Government had to get along as best they could with a small hybrid majority which vanished in any serious difficulty.

They joined forces with the traditional parties and they were already strong enough for these parties to be glad to come to terms with them; it was said, indeed, that their electoral success was largely due to Fascist votes. Thirty-five Fascist members were returned.

A great hope spread through the country that now that Fascism was represented in Parliament, it would become a supporter of order, and that its lawless activities would come to an end.

Many of the Fascisti, Mussolini among them, had not approved of the stupid and cowardly violence they had been guilty of; the destruction of the homes of the workers and of the premises of Trade Unions and Co-operatives, the private quarrels disguised as Fascism—and were disposed to make peace with the Socialists.

Mussolini declared in Parliament (July 1921) that it was time for Fascism to sheathe its sword, for they had to all intents and purposes gained a full victory and it was useless to hammer an enemy already defeated, that Bolshevism was levelled with the ground and the realization of Bolshevic theories postponed for hundreds of years, that Fascism should, therefore, make no more useless and dangerous martyrs, that Russian ideas should be allowed to die out quietly in silence and neglect. Violence is often an injection of oxygen that rouses a dying evil to life again.

There were many attempts at peace-making. On August 3, 1921, Socialists, Fascists, and Trade Union organizers signed an agreement to put a stop to acts of violence, under the auspices of the Speaker of the House.

Mussolini warmly supported the signing of the agreement. He and others feared that if Fascism continued in the path of violence it would lose all that it had gained. Already certain actions, that were entirely unjustifiable, had happened before the elections, and public opinion was beginning to be roused against them; many of their admirers were losing heart.

According to Mussolini:

"The peace treaty puts an end to the crises of Fascism, for henceforth its political element will have the upper hand and will exercise a definite control over what may be called its military element. In other words, the forces of action should function as an organ of Fascism—not to over-ride and supersede its authority but to carry out its orders. I believe that Fascism will be able to bring its energies to bear on politics and on all those outlying activities which are connected with politics, and that it will be able to retain the character of a disinterested movement that has hitherto belonged to it.

"The most tangible result of the peace agreement is the break-up of the only frontal attack which was being organized against the Fascists, and which extended from the Popular Party to the Anarchists. Two months ago the watchword might have been: 'Crush the mass'; to-day it had to be: 'Break up the mass.' This result has been gained. It would be childish to imagine that the pacification stipulated in the document can become an accomplished fact at once in every district of Italy. It will, however, undeniably bring about a general spirit of reconciliation which will gradually

restore the stable condition that has been so long and markedly disturbed." [1]

But it was too late. There were factions of the Fascists who refused to demobilize; they wanted to drive home their conquests, realizing their superior weight they wished to crush the "enemy."

Fascism had reached a crisis. The peace treaty with the Socialists was not being respected. The Emilian Fascists, in an inter-provincial meeting held at Bologna, had refused to sanction the signing of the treaty. Every day came fresh news of conflicts and violence instigated by the Fascists. Mussolini indignantly resigned from the central council of the Fascists and a vigorous controversy went on in the *Popolo d'Italia* newspaper. One faction of the Fascists joined forces with Benito Mussolini while the other was inclined to take its own course.

Mussolini denounced those who were not keeping their word and wrote thus:

"All sorts of wretched folk have taken refuge in Fascism, cowards who were afraid either of us or of others, selfish, rapacious people with no ideal of national conciliation, have wormed themselves in, and there are even those who have made use of the prestige of Fascist violence for their own selfish ends, or who have exchanged an only half-understood violence for violence for its own sake."

On another occasion, August 7, 1921, he expressed himself even more strongly: "Fascism is no longer liberation, but tyranny; no longer the safeguard of the Nation, but the upholding of private interests and of the most grovelling and

[1] In an interview with *Resto del Carlino*, August 4, 1921.

unenlightened classes existing in Italy. Fascism that takes this form will still be Fascism, but not that Fascism for which in those years of sorrow a few of us faced the fury of the masses, no longer that Fascism conceived by me in one of the darkest hours of recent Italian history." He hinted at the possibility of a split and did not regret it, adding :

" Were not the anti-Fascists fully aware of those cords of hatred that threatened to strangle the true Fascism together with the false? Did they not know that Fascism—even among the non-Socialist public—had become a byword of terror? I have severed that cord: slashed a way through the network of hatred, through that unbounded exasperation, of the vast masses of the public, which would have overwhelmed us : I have given back to Fascism all its possibilities, pointed out that the way to greatness lies through a truce—sacred to national aims and to Humanity—when behold, just as of old after party disputes, forth belches the heavy artillery of controversy and calumny about renunciations, betrayals, and the like tomfooleries.

" Well and good : it is high time Italian Fascism should put forward what it thinks and what it wants. The peace treaty is the test that forces men to make their choice. Next week should be a week of examination of the Fascist conscience. The results will show me what course I ought to take. I have shared responsibility of late with many uncongenial companions for love of Fascism. But there is a limit to everything, and I am near the extreme limit. Fascism can do without me? Certainly, but so can I do perfectly well without Fascism. There is room for all sorts in Italy :

even for thirty different varieties of Fascism, which means no Fascism at all.

"I speak plainly, as a man who having given much asks absolutely nothing, except to make a fresh start. . . ."

He affirms that: "The Socialists, after the agreement, have stood the test better than the Fascists," and recognizes that: "We do not find among them discussions, schisms, and denunciations; but an admission of the accomplished fact. . . . In the Fascist field things are very different—hole and corner meetings, local congresses, and repudiation of the agreement.

"If instead they would only accept the treaty and try to apply it; then Fascism might escape from the crisis that threatens it and, above all, from the terrible blind-alley down which it is being driven. To declare—as was done at Bologna—a real, ardent, and firm desire for peace and then to spurn the first attempt towards its realization, is absurd, to say the least."

And to those Fascists who wanted war to continue without truce, he asked, in the issue of the *Popolo d'Italia* for August 18th:

"How is peace to come about? Perhaps you think you can get it by wiping out the two millions of citizens who voted for the Socialist Party? But are you not running the risk of perpetuating civil war? Or of finding yourselves in rebellion against the whole spirit of the Nation? Or of being obliged to submit to a Socialist peace to-morrow, owing to some other quite probable turn of the tables? Do you not see signs of this? Will not the single anti-Fascist front, destroyed by the

agreement, form up again to-morrow almost automatically?"

And here is the opinion on Fascism—still from the *Popolo d'Italia*—of Cesare Rossi, one of the pillars of Fascism who was wont at one time to extol the movement in the most highly coloured terms.

"Fascism has become, in truth, an entirely conservative and reactionary movement. . . . It reacts with foolish and purposeless cruelty against everything that tells of progress and achievement in the life of to-day, against all that has been gained, all that makes for peace.

"The Fascists in the civil war zones, ready to ignore with alarming flippancy the most ordinary customs and needs of social life and of political convention, have actually come to the point of violating the freedom of the Press and the right of conference and association against their adversaries. That very character, in fact, of petty, overbearing tyranny, of which we used to accuse the Socialist Party in the days, bright or dark, of their supremacy, has now been transferred to the very heart of the Fascist movement."[1]

But Mussolini could no longer exact obedience. In many districts it was impossible for Fascism to disarm itself spontaneously: before the agreement was made with the Socialists there had been a tacit understanding with the farmers, the manufacturers, and the financiers. Both agreements could not be kept at the same time: the one cancelled the other.

[1] They want, for instance, to make strikes illegal.

Civil war went on in an exasperating fashion. We were again in a very serious position. The State seemed on the point of collapse, and appeals for the restoration of order multiplied. In a speech before Parliament on November 30, 1921, the ex-minister, Labriola, summed up the situation :

"The spirit of anarchy in the country proceeds from a lack of authority in the Government organs. There are in this country about five separate parties acting as States within the State : the Popular Party, the Socialists, the Employers, the Great Banks, and the Fascists. We give in to one of these one day and to another the next. Our public works are conceded to the Popular Party, our millions to the shipowners, while to the Fascists and to the Socialists we make concessions.

"The confusion in the country arises from the State having ceased to function, for it ought to mean not only magistracy, police, and treasury, but also an ideal. Yet the Italian State was glorious with its historic Right and Left; it used to act as a true democracy, but between June 1919 and July 1920 it broke down completely, fulfilling its specific duties less and less, and allowing the five other States I have named to usurp its place.

"This provoked the Civil War of these last two years. It is only too true, Signor Mussolini, that the conflagrations of the Labour Councils have illuminated neither a great man nor a great ideal, but only a mournful spectacle of devastation and violence. (Applause from the Extremists, howls from the Right.)

"The State must return to its original aims; using parties in the interests of the country, not

the country in the interests of parties. The modest programme of the Socialist Party is already realized, and this is a credit to Italian democracy. (Comments from the Extremists.) In a sense democracy has anticipated reform. Thus there have been strikes against paying the workers' share of the insurance guarantee, but an experienced Labour class ought to understand its rights and its duties better than this. . . .

"The Socialist Party has obtained more than if it had taken a part in the Government.

"To achieve Socialism by means of a dictatorship of the proletariate is hopeless; whereas Liberalism and Democracy may be the heralds of any transformation.

"The fundamental fact is the obvious disappearance of class distinctions, and by this means the instruments of production are bound to pass into the hands of Labour. The question that torments us is as to whether the masters of the future will be capable of the tasks entrusted to them. . . .

"And we can now come to Fascism. This is a subject . . . it is better to speak of with the utmost respect. (Great hilarity, even Mussolini laughing.) Fascism is a product of the state of anarchy into which the country has been thrown. Renan used to define order as a result of civilization: the brigand turned gendarme.

"The Fascists say they are acting for our country, but we will never allow anyone to seem to speak to us about our country in tones more ardent than our own.

"United democracy is still able to provide men capable of guiding the State. The country is call-

ing out for peace and tranquillity; peace against the Fascists and the Communists, peace against even the Popular Party. (Protest from the Centre.) Peace can be restored only by a Government of the people ; this Gordian knot can be cut only by democracy."

But appeals for peace from outsiders availed, of course, even less than the appeals of the Fascists themselves. At length matters became pressing, the centrifugal tendencies of Fascism asserting themselves more and more. But the more Fascism pitted itself against the State, the nearer it was to becoming its mainstay.

Its control over all citizens, its dictatorial methods, seemed still to offer some hope of restoring social equilibrium. Poverty had been increasing enormously throughout the country. At that time I wrote that "the Nation is placed in a more serious position than during the war. To overcome it we need the measures that, during the war, forced everyone to concentrate on Labour or on defence of the realm. But we also need that stimulating ideal of energy, devotion, and discipline that cannot be found in war against mankind, but only in working for the good of the community; what we need is that the re-making of Italy shall become a social ideal." [1]

At the end of December 1921 the "Fasci di Combattimento" were reformed into the National Fascist Party, drawing up a more elaborate programme than that formed in 1919.[2]

[1] In the volume *Verso le Gilde*, p. 6 (The Guild Movement).
[2] See Appendix II.

At that time the supporters of Fascism were more than 320,000, and from calculation based on 151,644 members, they were in the following proportions :

13,878 merchants and apprentices.
4,269 manufacturers.
9,981 professional men.
7,209 Government employees.
14,989 private employees.
1,680 teachers.
19,783 students.
1,506 marine workers.
23,448 agricultural workers.
18,084 land-owners (including small farmers and tenants).

Of these 111,853 were voters, 87,182 ex-service men, 21 had been decorated with the gold medal, 1,011 with the silver medal, and 4,845 with the bronze medal: 1,122 were public servants, 138 Co-operatives, 64,000 members of Trade Unions, of whom two-thirds were in the provinces of Emilia, Tuscany, and Venice.

In January 1922 the various "National Trade Unions," created by the Fascists, were formed into the Confederation of the Fascist Corporations. The following motions were passed; later, these formed the basis of the constitution of the organization[1] :

"The Trade Unions Convention of Bologna (January 24, 1922), affirms the need of forming into National Corporations, affiliated to a central organization called the *Federal Union of Italian Corporations,* all the Trade Unions whose programme and activities substantially conform to the

[1] See Appendix III.

programme and constitution of the National Fascist Party."

In order to define clearly the character and scope of this new organization, the Convention drew up the following headings:

"(1) Labour constitutes the sovereign title to the full and efficient citizenship of a man in the social assembly.

"(2) Labour is the result of effort harmoniously directed towards producing, perfecting, and increasing whatever makes for the material, moral, and spiritual well-being of mankind.

"(3) All those who, in whatever way, employ or dedicate their activities to the aforesaid ends, shall consider themselves as workers—and the Trade Union Organization should be prepared to welcome them under suitable groups without any ostracism of class.

"(4) The Nation—considered as the synthesis of all the material and spiritual values of the race—shall be above individuals, categories, and classes.

"Individuals, categories, and classes are instruments made use of by the Nation for gaining a great position. Individuals, categories, and classes hold all rights and privileges on condition that these are consistent with the higher national interest.

"(5) Trade Union organization—which is the weapon for defence and victory against all forms of parasitism—should aim at developing among its adherents the conscious and intelligent purpose of bringing their Trade Union activity to bear upon the complexities of social life, spreading the ideal that Country and Society are beyond class.

"The National Corporations federated to the *Italian Federal Union of Corporations* are the following :—

"(*a*) The National Corporation of Industrial Labour.

"(*b*) The National Corporation of Agricultural Labour.

"(*c*) The National Corporation of Commerce.

"(*d*) The National Corporation of the Middle and Intellectual classes.

"(*e*) The National Corporation of Marine Workers."

A methodical campaign now began, on a national scale, among the Labour organizations to try to get them to join the Fascist Corporations ; military occupation of city and province was extended. The Communist Communal Dictatorships now became Fascist Dictatorships.

Fascism was everywhere. It mobilized its army, bargained with the State, and ordered demobilization when the State gave in. The Trade Union Monopolies, crushed by Fascism while it was merely political, now became in many places re-established under the iron rule of the Fascist Unions. There was no respite for the employers, who were absolutely bewildered by the fact that a movement they had backed up hitherto could uphold the interests of their foes.

The police, the magistrates, and the bureaucracy were all in sympathy with Fascism, which was thenceforth the most potent force in the country. Officers high up in the army—even Generals—

enlisted among the Fascists and commanded its militia. All this was contrary to the written law, but henceforth the Fascist law held sway, preparing the way for the Fascist State. Political Party, Trade Union Movement, Armed Militia, all moved in co-ordination towards the conquest of the country and the Government.

The legal State seemed no longer to exist. The Trade Unions had no intention of surrendering without making one last attempt at recovery. On July 31, 1922, a general strike was declared by the Trade Unions, under the direction of Social-Communists, Syndicalists and Republicans, a strike called "legalitarian," because its sole aim was to establish order and bring the State and the ruling classes to their senses. The strike as such was a success, but like all former general strikes of simple protest without precise and concrete aims, it was useless and only served to aggravate the situation.

The Fascists regarded it as a challenge and demanded counter-mobilization, ordering the Government to stop the strike, in an ultimatum couched in these terms:

"We give the State forty hours in which to give some proof of its authority to all who depend upon it and to those who are making attempts upon the very life of the Nation. When this time has elapsed, Fascism will take upon itself full liberty of the action, and will take the place of the State that will have once more shown its impotence."

This ultimatum, published in the form of a proclamation: "Was the public, written proof of

the existence of a new Government, unofficial, resolute, energetic, ready to use force rather than the everlasting jargon of humanitarians, demagogues, pacifists, and so forth, side by side with another Government, official, feeble, uncertain as to what to do next, unwilling to resort to force, ready to adopt instead the innumerable canting terms of the humanitarians and the rest of the crew."[1]

The Government did not act with the energy required by the Fascists ; it hoped once more to meet the situation by means of compromise, trying once again to hand over its own responsibilities to the Socialists. The democratic elements in Parliament—not, however, supported by efficient organization in the country—wanted the State to resist and form a Coalition Government, into which they were even willing to admit some of the Fascists. But none of these various parties were able to come to any agreement.

The general strike, having aimed at nothing but a protest, had been called off officially ; nevertheless, it meandered on and the Fascists continued their smashing counter-offensive. On August 3rd they took possession of the Municipality of Milan and afterwards many other municipalities and provinces.[2]

[1] G. Sensi : "The Beginning in Italy of a New Social Cycle," *La Vita Italiana*, November 15, 1922.

[2] Throughout this period the planting of the Tricolour over the Socialist municipalities was an act of war and of victory. The Social-Communists persisted in considering themselves as representatives of the proletariate and not of the whole community, refusing to recognize national symbols and offending and insulting national feelings.

The burning and seizing of Labour and Co-operative premises continued, and the Fascist offensive waged war against the organizations and communities of the Popularists and Republicans. Then followed demoralization and a general panic in the ranks of all the Labour Parties and organizations, particularly those under Socialist and Communist leadership.

Then came the resignation in a body of the Socialist communal and provincial administrations, and even of other factions, whole groups of Trade Unionists and Co-operatives turning, willy-nilly, to Fascism.

When this occurred the real decline of Socialism began. The organizations turned of necessity first and foremost; they could not be more browbeaten than they now were, and there were many reasons why they were forced to turn. Labourers who were not Fascists in some neighbourhoods, particular farming districts, were boycotted and could not get work; and they had no savings to help them stick it out.

It was essential to save the Co-operative Societies which represented enormous collected funds—the organized creative effort of decades—and this was impossible except by their absorption into the Fascist Corporations. At the same time there was a great deal of unemployment, and the workmen were suffering from it and had to accept the conditions dictated to them. The Fascists were inexorable, requiring a complete submission and refusing to listen to compromises or a *modus vivendi*. The majority, in order to defend their own organizations which they would not or could

not allow to die out, joined the Fascists, not forgetting, however, the essence of their traditions. They did not altogether understand the internal party strifes, which were often nothing but hair-splitting, and took no interest in them. The Trade Union and the Co-operative Society were their chief concern.

But there were numbers of workmen who joined Fascism of their own accord, without having been forced into it by Fascist violence, numbers at first unorganized or of a semi-Labour character; others were drawn in by patriotic feeling. The stirring up of national sentiments persuaded many people to organize themselves who had formerly been refractory to any vocational organization. At a stroke Fascism became the movement and banding together of the masses. It was numerically the most powerful organization in the country.

All this naturally brought about confusion in the old organizations. The Labour Party and the General Confederation of Labour had reached a crisis. The responsibilities of Fascism were growing. Fascism was bound to ask itself frankly: "Whither are you leading?" Mussolini did not hesitate to say that they were probably leading towards a Trade Union State. The Fascist Trade Union Movement was assuming all the features of Trade Union Socialism. How was it to be transformed into a movement not opposed to the Nation and State, and that will not upset but rather strengthen the stability of State and of Society as it develops? This was the problem unexpectedly presented to Fascism, the very

problem that the old movements had not known how to solve.

Claudio Treves, a Reformist leader, said very aptly in the Parliament of August 9, 1922:

"In future Fascism, too, has its responsibilities before it. The iron rod will have its *raison d'être*. If this is to be Trade Unionism we do not fear it. We already see it resorting to the monopoly of Labour, refusing the right of working to all who do not carry its badge—the very gravest accusation that it brought against our Trade Unions. The truth is that all the working classes, in whatever manner they are organized, tend to form for themselves a monopoly of Labour."

Confronting these new problems is the declaration of the accredited Fascists that they would like nothing better than to bring back the Labour class into the Nation, that they are not opposed to it and its fundamental demands. Socialism and its Trade Union Movement ought to re-examine its principles and decide the responsibilities of its present position.

In the early part of October 1922 was held the Congress of the Socialist Party; a violent collision took place at it between the Reformists and the Massimalists and other uncompromising groups: the Congress, by a small majority, expelled the Reformists and voted for affiliation with the Third International; sooner or later, therefore, the Socialist Party may pool its forces with those of the Italian Communist Party which was founded in 1921 by the Communist faction, an earlier offshoot from the old Socialist Party

which is now recognized by the Third International as its Italian Section.[1]

The expelled Reformists, Turati's followers, created at once the "Unitarian Socialist Party," and launched the following most important manifesto :

"WORKERS !

"The split in the Italian Socialist Party, begun at Leghorn, has just been completed at Rome.

"The responsibility—a responsibility we have always deprecated—does not lie with us. Within the Socialist Party, two principles, implying two radically divergent methods of action, have been recently emphasized by new conditions—the principle of *Socialism* and the principle of *Communism*.

"The principle of Socialism, in accordance with the traditional programme decided on at the Congress of Genoa in 1892, where the party was founded, approved all tactics that could be of use to the proletariate, more or less uncompromising according to the behaviour and attitude of the constitutional parties. It aimed at the progressive conquest of political power in direct relation with the transformation of the capitalist system which was being effected by means of the great Trade Union and Co-operative Movements and of the Socialist hold upon local administration. The Socialist principle stands for universal suffrage and the right of the majority ; makes propaganda our first duty ;

[1] This joining of forces, however, encounters considerable resistance from certain members or groups who disapprove of the autocratic methods of the Third International which interferes with the autonomy of its national sections.

condemns violence and systematic conspiracy, trusting to the security and strength that arise from public liberty.

" In opposition to this conception the Communist principle, basing itself solely and entirely on the proceedings and the example of the Russian Revolution, proposes, as the immediate aim of the class war, the violent conquest of power by means of complete expropriation of the bourgeoisie, through the dictatorship of the proletariate, or rather, of the Communist Party ; and denies that any advantage is to be gained by any dealings with a bourgeois Government. It denies also any possibility that the economic regime can be improved by reforms of any kind, considering the bourgeoisie as a single reactionary ' bloc ' with no division of economic or political interests so that any attempt at Socialist reconstruction must be deferred till after the destruction of capitalist Society.

" The Communist principle, which has always been at work as a ferment in our party, increased enormously after the war, gathering strength from the bitter disappointments of the war itself and the broken promises of the bourgeoisie, and nourished the dream of a new and better world through revolution.

" The dream was dashed to pieces by the shock of reality in the industrial crisis, which hit the proletariate at least as severely as the bourgeoisie. In this capitalist crisis, which is no passing event but a turning-point in history, the proletariate, if it is not to bear alone the whole disastrous effect, economic and political, of the present national and

international situation, must defend its consumers, its liberty, and its very existence. On the ruin of these dreams, as a furious rebound and counter-attack, came the bourgeois reaction that calls itself Fascism.

"Fascism hurled itself with fury upon all that Socialism had gained, with so much wonderful patience and perseverance, for the proletariate, by its Unions and Co-operatives, it strove to withdraw all the social and democratic concessions of the last thirty years of the national life; it struck at and menaced even the essential guarantees of social and civil life while the Government looked on indifferent or complacent; it made no secret of its aim, to substitute an autocratic State for a liberal and democratic one.

"Such were the conditions when our comrades, who had pledged themselves to the Third International, chose to redeem their pledge by splitting our party by bringing to the vote the conflict between the two irreconcilable principles, Socialism and Communism.

"The Unitarian Socialist Party, cast out by a very small majority, was, at once, reconstituted, not as a fraction, but as the true representative to carry on the historic work of that glorious Socialist Party which, in its Genoa programme, aiming at the abolition of the capitalist system, consecrated itself to work for the organized proletariate by any and every means for which opportunity should arise and which, through thirty years of labour and propaganda, overcoming all reactions, has brought the proletariate from a condition of mediæval poverty, ignorance, and misery

to the attainment of public liberty, to universal suffrage, to raised wages, and an eight-hour day; we ask now from the people intelligence and good-will, so that the same struggles which have been hitherto for a more civilized distribution of wealth may be directed now towards the improvement of the bourgeois system of production and an increase in the wealth and civilization of Italy.

"This work of raising slowly but surely the condition, moral and intellectual, of the people, incessantly opposed by the Conservative and Nationalist Parties, was first arrested and then threatened by the Great War. After the war came but a painful and niggardly fulfilment of the promises made while it lasted, and in consequence a harvest of unbridled envy and violence, international relations influenced more and more by Imperialism and by treaties of peace that brought no peace, and home affairs that were nothing but a continuous, agitating conflict between the forces of revolution and reaction. Whichever of these forces may, in the end, prevail, will stand appalled at the bankruptcy of the State and the cruelty of a vindictive, one-sided warfare.

"WORKERS!

"The Socialist Party, as its first act after its re-constitution, salutes those comrades who have fallen victims to reaction—the conquered, the humiliated, the down-trodden—and swears by their sufferings that it will not cease from crying out on iniquity and will never rest until law and order have been restored, whether it has to hold the field alone or whether it be supported by others who stand for the restoration of public order or

who are moved by pure humanity and love of country.

"We are not afraid of being accused of collaboration when such an attitude is obviously demanded by the highest interests of the proletariate, provided that such collaboration does not interfere with the autonomy of our party or weaken the class consciousness of the proletariate and its sense of responsibility to our country and to the International.

"We want peace—at home and abroad. We are not sheep-like pacifists, although we hold human life sacred. To demand peace is not to ignore the economic and political strife between classes, parties, and nations, but only to maintain that that strife need not be always waged by the primitive method of force—just as the differences between nations are ill-decided by warfare which, as we have found in our most tragic experience, has solved one question only by raising a number of others still more thorny. Take for example the settlement of Eastern Europe and Asia Minor, which has paved the way for a still more terrible clash in the future between West and East, stirred up by the conquered, who were ostracized at the Peace of Versailles and who are eager for reprisals.

"This is why, even for the sake of our own country, we are, and shall continue to be, Internationalists. In order to prevent new wars, we look forward to an International which shall be worthy of the name, which will unite the proletariate of the different countries, because in each they are acting on the same lines, doing the necessary democratic work of persuasion, and using

all their political influence in favour of the revision of the treaties, for the remission of war debts, for a rational settlement of Reparations and for the re-instatement of a sound European Society, in which the conquered States and Russia will participate on equal terms. We shall not follow the Second International, which compromised itself by a Nationalist policy during the war ; nor the Third, which seems to be the political organ of a single State and would interfere with our autonomy. A new effort is now needed ; it had already begun to direct the Socialist Party before the break caused by its allegiance to the Moscow International. We think that in the Parliaments of Europe a great deal might be done even now towards realizing the ideal of inter-parliamentary Socialism, by means of frequent discussions and agreements between the Socialist groups in the different Parliaments, leading to simultaneous action with regard to political and Trade Union questions and social legislation. Hindrances and uncertainties might thus be got rid of which are due to that industrial and commercial competition, which is made use of by capitalists of all countries as an excuse for disregarding the rights of Labour and the laws intended to protect them.

"WORKERS !

"Notwithstanding this clear statement of our intentions the reactionaries will go on calling us anti-Italians and traitors. But no one loves our country with her self-government, the expansive force of her labour, the vigour and industry of her people, more than we do. It is for this people that we are seeking liberty and justice ; it is for

them that the Socialist Party asks that the economic guarantees already granted should stand firm, inviting them to resist in the crisis of the after-war oppression. The rehabilitation of the finances of the State which we insist on must not be at the expense of indispensable necessaries of civilization, such as education and old age pensions. Economies of that kind are absurd. We certainly do not wish to improve the economic position of the Nation by sending back the proletariate into slavery. The State whose authority is lessened day by day through the reactionaries who usurp its powers must cease to be the organ of a few privileged interests and must begin to represent the wider interests of the Nation which are identical with the interests of Labour. This is the aim of our political struggle. It is for this we are laughed at as Social democrats ; we reply that, in the failure of democracy, it is our function faithfully to uphold its standard.

"WORKERS !

"Propaganda, organization, education, co-operation, Parliament, the tribune, the Trade Union ; this is the field we must labour in. In the break-up of parties, the Confederation of Labour has proclaimed its autonomy ; but this does not imply independence of Socialism.

"There is no sense in the notion that the Trade Unions should have no politics. Labour politics and Trade Unionism have but one source and one aim, which subordinates the everyday actions and interests of individual workers or groups to the great ideal of the collective interests of Labour, so as to avoid those petty egoisms

which lead to rivalry between comrade and comrade. Workers in fields and factories, workers by hand and brain, form a single and sacred community bound by a spirit of high comradeship. Our party, free from the bonds of dogmatism, welcomes light from every source and free discussion to work out a collective creed, based on knowledge, criticism, and experience. It must be the work of each of us to acquire knowledge and skill and character. Our strongest weapon is education.

" WORKERS !

" If times are dark and war and reaction flash through the gloom, our faith must shine the brighter. Socialism stands before us—light and hope of the conquered and down-trodden. Under the storm of jibes, injury, and persecution, let us unite more faithfully than ever before.

" WORKERS !

" Let us work for liberty, for civilization, for Socialism."

ROME, *October* 9, 1922.

After this split in the Socialist Movement, a substantial part of it definitely entered the sphere of national political life and became a national party representing Classical Socialism.[1]

[1] That this new Socialist Party has a substantial following was proved by the result of the late municipal elections in Milan, December 13, 1922, when it gained a big vote in spite of the difficult situation, and against a coalition of all the other parties, led by the Fascisti, as will be seen by the following figures : Voters, 153,621 ; Coalition, 87,368 ; Unitarian Socialists, 45,254 ; Maximalists, 17,259 ; Communists, 3,288. But what gives to the party political importance is not so much the number of its members

There was now no possible excuse for accusing the Unitarian Socialists of being anti-national. Of course, there was still a good deal of bitterness, and the new party could not settle down to work all at once.

But while, in the past, the Socialists had been accustomed to consider the political aspect of their organizations as extremely important, more so, indeed, than any other, the experience of the last few years has shown that to make politics the ruling element in the Labour Movement is a hindrance to the development of its intrinsic tendencies.[1]

In consequence it was now thought that:

"The Socialist political organization is practically played out since it has aroused class consciousness among the workers in such a markedly aggressive manner that it has had the effect of awakening a similar feeling in the ranks of the bourgeoisie.

"The opposition between the classes having been thus emphasized, though we may from one point of view make light of what our manifesto calls class war, we have to face the fact that the proletariate

but their quality; the Reformists have many experienced and brilliant leaders, they are the best schooled men in the Socialist Movement, the best administrators and the most efficient organizers; the Revolutionists have always pushed them into the foreground when permanent and constructive work had to be done. Mass movements require widespread capacity rather than a few able political leaders, and widespread capacity is equally lacking in the old Socialist Party and in the Communist Party.

[1] It should be remembered that, oddly enough, it was not organized Labour that had hitherto directed Labour politics, but a mere handful of politicians—the dictators of the Socialist Party. Organized Labour fell into a political snare and with its vast organizations and institutions became the scapegoat for the mistakes, inefficiency, and bluff of "revolutionary politicians."

masses can no longer marshal themselves in the ranks, necessarily restricted and specialized of the Socialist Party, but will have to organize themselves under their Trade Unions, henceforth permeated with the class spirit.

"In my opinion the political organization cannot keep up the pretence of being the director of the Trade Union Movement, but should be its helper and its instrument; this is a necessity against which it is useless to rebel. The Labour Movement of the more progressive of the civilized nations has given in to it and so also at last have the Labour and Socialist Movements in Italy, in spite of much reluctance.

"At first the General Confederation of Labour was, so to speak, subordinate to the party, then there came to be an agreement on a footing of equality, which continued to exist, at least officially; now the time has come for matters to be reversed: the General Confederation of Labour must be supreme.

"In my opinion it is solely by means of this progress of Socialism from the phase of politics to the phase of Trade Unionism that a political collaboration can be formed which will have the courage to proceed from suggestion to action; a Socialist political party is, as it were, condemned to undergo certain crises because it is, after all, an organization mainly idealist. On the other hand, the Labour Trade Unions are, in the main, a realist organization which is not at all likely to allow theory to transform and outweigh reality."[1]

[1] G. E. Modigliani, M.R., a Reformist leader, in an interview with *Il Mondo*, September 1, 1922.

The Directive Council of the Labour Confederation, in view of the new situation in the Socialist political movement, issued the following statement in their "orders of the day."

"(*a*) That in the short space of time between January 1921 and October 1922, in spite of the noble efforts made by many individuals and groups to keep the Socialist body intact, the party split on two occasions, which led to the creation of three distinct parties with about the same numerical strength in each.

"(*b*) That each of these, considering itself as the mouthpiece of genuine Socialism, would claim to be officially recognized as the legitimate representative of the proletariate in the political world.

"(*c*) That in view of the breaking-up of the old Socialistic Party the pact of alliance made with it must be considered as null and void.

"(*d*) That the drawing up of a new pact with one of the parties now in existence would cause unbridled jealousies and contentions on the part of the various political elements within the Trade Unions; appealing to the decisions of Stoccarda, which refer to the pact of alliance, in which it is stated that the relations between the Trade Unions and the political parties must not compromise the essential unity of the Trade Union Movement; it decides to keep the General Confederation of Labour free from all obligations to any political party, holding such a measure indispensable to the maintenance of federal union.

"By the proclamation of its independence the General Confederation of Labour does not mean to adopt a policy of narrow Labourism, nor to take

upon itself the functions of a political party. On the contrary it proposes to set itself free to fulfil the special tasks of the Trade Union, which are clearly different from those of the political movement. It reaffirms its fixed intention of directing its energies to the class struggle and to the ideal of completely emancipating the working classes from any and every form of exploitation, explaining its activities as being employed, by no means against, or exclusive of, the Nation, but as working with it, in accordance with the pacifist and international rights belonging to the labouring classes. The General Confederation of Labour, whilst it renews the oft-repeated declaration that not only will manual labour be reckoned among the forces of production and renovation, but also that intellectual and artistic work which ought to take the position it deserves by its collaboration with the Trade Union Movement, hopes that the longed-for unity of all the Italian proletariate into one Trade Union organism, including all classes, may soon be an accomplished fact."

By means of this decision the Labour Confederation regained its full freedom of action, without relinquishing its demands and ideals, and dispelled the idea that it was an anti-national organization; and by means of an explicit recognition that brain-workers should take their place in the very heart of Trade Unionism, it emphasized its former declarations on the subject.

This new point of view on the part of the more important sections of the Socialist and Labour Movement may put a stop to the absurdity of looking upon Labour as an outcast and treating

her accordingly, and may lead to her being incorporated in the State, especially as this is now the wish of the Fascisti.

Thus the majority of the Italian Socialist and Labour Movement have abandoned revolutionary illusions and turned towards practical constructive action.

The "Revolutionaries" and Communists still believe that the present capitalist order must inevitably break down and that social reconstruction is impossible, but, drawing inferences from their own hard experience and from the changed policy of Russian Communism they are not so sure about the immediateness of the downfall of capitalism and about the feasibility of artificially provoking it. Therefore they can do no more than prepare themselves for the moment when they will have to assume greater responsibilities; on the one hand, this preparation involves the education and organization of their masses, and forbids violent and sporadic upheavals; on the other hand, it obliges them to exert the utmost vigilance and control over Reformist activities, lest "Reformism" should be captured by a plutocratic democracy. Communism, with these limitations imposed on it, may safeguard the Labour Movement from departures, which are a menace to the eventual collaboration of Labour with the bourgeoisie.

But to continue our narrative: after the smashing counter-offensive of the Fascists in August 1922, a Fascist march upon Rome was beginning to be spoken of. Mussolini, in an interview on August 11th, spoke of it in these terms:

"The march upon Rome is in being. Understand me, I am not speaking of the march of two or three hundred thousand 'Black Shirts,' who form the formidable strength of Fascism. Such a march is strategically possible, following the three great routes of the Adriatic and the Mediterranean coasts and the Tiber valley, all of which are, by this time, absolutely under our control. But 'politically' we are not yet forced to it. The coming months will decide the matter."

These propositions threw Parliament into an uproar; they talked of a new election, and tried to find some solution or compromise. On the one hand the Socialist and Trade Union *revirement* made any Fascist "reprisals" quite unjustifiable (but peace between Fascists and Socialists was now impossible because those who had imagined that Socialism could be stamped out and were interested that it should be, urged Fascism to resist any attempt at conciliation), on the other hand, the actual position of Fascism was so critical that it had to take action at once.

The fate of Fascism was decided by the diversity of its own interests—interests which had grown up within it and which were often in open conflict. Having become the movement of vast masses, with Trade Unions and Co-operatives, obviously it could not go on with its policy of destruction! Its army was tending to become, if not actually autonomous, certainly a controlling power over its politics; the danger being (to use the expression of a Fascist deputy) "that the armed militia might devour Fascism," meaning that the military part of the organization might swamp

that which, working in the political field, more clearly realized the difficulties of the situation.

Certain political traits of Fascism, especially its scepticism on the subject of the monarchy, began to trouble the military ranks so that they refused to support Fascism any longer. Fascist Trade Unionism was beginning to mean business, and did not make for a peaceful state of mind in the field of production ; manufacturers were beginning to be anxious and to withdraw their support, without which the upkeep of the militia and the whole costly Fascist Movement would have been an impossibility.

Conditions in the country were disastrous and exasperating ; there was a mental tension similar to that in the darkest days of the Social-Communist offensive.[1]

In consequence, a strong feeling against Fascism was beginning to spring up even among its admirers. Henceforth all the faults of the vacillating State were laid at the door of Fascism. All parties pressed the Government to take up the reins again with energy.

The Fascist leaders saw the danger ; saw what had come of internal quarrels, and that it was impossible to keep the multiform machinery of Fascism much longer in working order, because action and only action could maintain that iron discipline that had saved it up till now ; they

[1] By this time not even the Fascists themselves had any control over Fascist violence ; it often sank to the level of a purely personal " vendetta " ; it took the basest forms ; and had no longer any respect for anybody or anything, even going to the lengths of persecuting the non-Fascist ex-Service men and also the Legionaries.

saw, too, the dangers threatening from without to put a stop to its activity.

Therefore it was necessary to press matters. The Fascists organized a great assembly at Naples (October 24, 1922), to which Fascists poured in from all over Italy. Mussolini explicitly declared himself in favour of the monarchy, which disarmed the suspicions of the army about Fascism. Then, like a thunderbolt, came a ministerial crisis. There was still some hope of saving the situation by absorbing Fascism into the Government. Fascists were offered certain of the Government positions.

Fascism scented danger: on the one hand, to accept small concessions and take part in the Government would mean demobilization and self-extinction; on the other, by continuing its centrifugal activities either it would damage the State or the State would crush Fascism. In order to prevent itself from being absorbed or crushed, Fascism decided on the march on Rome, which was resolutely carried out, without meeting with serious resistance from the State, and with the approbation of the army, the police, and a wide section of the populace.

Come what would, the Fascist experiment had to be made; it was, in fact, the only definite solution possible.

CHAPTER VI

MOTIVES AND TENDENCIES OF THE DICTATORSHIP

BEFORE writing this book, and in order to detach myself spiritually from history in the making, I have re-read Machiavelli's *The Prince* and A.E.'s *The National Being*. These two books are extraordinarily up to date in their approach, from two different points of view, to the actual problem before us—the building up of a national civilization from complex and chaotic conditions. I hoped that reading about Italy at the threshold of our modern epoch and studying Ireland at the dawn of her renewed national life might throw some light on the present situation in Italy, which is spoken of usually as an entirely new departure. Machiavelli was not, as many of his critics imply, a base intriguer in the pay of ambitious tyrants and writing a text-book on their behalf on the enslavement of peoples by autocratic methods. He saw that the small States into which Italy was broken up were being ruined by their rapacious rulers, and that the time had come to drive them out and to create a united Italy with a strong Central Power. It was natural that, owing to the conditions prevailing in his time, he did not

look for a democracy—even the Guild republics of Italy were under a kind of military aristocratic leadership, but for a Prince, a strong man, to carry into effect the high aim that he had in mind. It is true that he sometimes advised perfidious means, but perfidy was characteristic of his time, and he justified them by the sanctity of his aim.

Any means were allowable when the independence, liberty, and unity of Italy were at stake. From the various expedients of statecraft afforded by his time, each one of which was used ordinarily for personal ends, he evolves a systematic and conscious national policy.

One of the points on which he most insists is that without a powerful military national organization—citizen soldiers instead of mercenaries—neither Prince nor people will be able to accomplish national unity with the new forms of government that it entails. He tells the Prince that a well-organized militia will be needed, not merely for the conquest of the State, but for ruling it afterwards.

He warns Princes that difficulties will arise "from the new laws and modes of living they are forced to introduce to establish their State and their security. And it ought to be remembered that there is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things. Because the innovator has for enemies all those who have done well under the old conditions, and luke-warm defenders in those who may do well under the

new: this very luke-warmness arises partly from fear of opponents, who have the old laws on their side, and partly from the incredulity of men, who do not readily believe in new things until they have had a long experience of them. Thus it happens that whenever those who are hostile have the opportunity to attack they do it partially; whilst the others defend luke-warmly; in such wise that the Prince is endangered along with them.

"It is necessary, therefore, if we desire to discuss this matter thoroughly, to inquire whether these innovators can rely on themselves or have to depend on others: that is to say, whether, to consummate their enterprise, have they to seek favours or can they use force. Hence it is that all armed prophets have conquered, and the unarmed ones have failed: because, besides the reasons mentioned, the nature of the peoples is variable, and whilst it is easy to persuade them, it is difficult to fix them in that persuasion. And thus it is necessary to take such measures that, when they believe no longer, it may be possible to make them believe by force."[1]

Machiavelli justifies violence so long as it serves to strengthen and secure the State, but, that accom-

[1] "I declare that my desire is to govern, if possible, with consent of the majority; but, in order to obtain, to foster and to strengthen that consent, I will use all the force at my disposal.

"For it may happen that force may bring about consent and, if that fails, there is always force. With regard to all the requirements of government, even the most severe, we shall offer this dilemma accept in the spirit of patriotism, or submit.

"This is my conception of the State and of the art of governing the nation."—Mussolini in a speech to the Department of Finance, March 7, 1923.

plished, it must give place to action in the interests of the subjects. He is in favour of a strong Central Power based on the people, and not of Absolutism based on a small aristocracy. A Prince cannot with justice, and without injury to others, satisfy the nobles ; but he should satisfy the people, because their interests are not petty but honourable ; instead of wishing to oppress others, they ask only not to be oppressed themselves.

" A Prince," he affirms, " stands in need of a friendly people ; otherwise he has nowhere to turn to in adversity." He considers, in fact, that a State is secure and stable when its citizens wish it to be so in all places and at all times ; only thus is the fidelity of its subjects secure.

While Machiavelli, unable to foresee the modern factors of a true national life at work, and drawing inspiration perforce from his own time and the history of the past, sees in the Prince the formative force of a national civilization, A.E. believes in a national civilization brought about by means of a democracy, freely discussing its laws—an economic democracy that will recognize a hierarchy of function and will be led by an aristocracy, not of birth, but of intellect and character.

Machiavelli seeks national welfare in the political unity brought about by the Prince ; A.E. insists on the unity of economic life, brought about through communal life and co-operation. Machiavelli does not look beyond the Prince, i.e. politically united Italy, while A.E. looks forward to the highest civilization in which the individual citizen is raised above himself and made part of a greater life ; this greater life he calls " National Being." He

does not think that the impulse to create a true social organism, in which the citizens are brought together to form a united whole by means of their work, will come from government.

"Our modern States have not yet succeeded in building up that true national life where all feel the identity of interest; where the true social or civic feeling is engendered and the individual bends all his efforts to the success of the community on which his own depends; where, in fact, the ancient Greek conception of citizenship is realized, and individuals are created who are conscious of the identity of interest between themselves and their race."[1]

To A.E. the building up of a new civilization is a great adventure. "At once, the noblest and the most practical of enterprises," to be carried out by the whole people, all categories of citizens, using all the means which, during a nation's history, have revealed themselves and have proved to be

[1] *The National Being*, p. 42. Mussolini says something very like this: "I mean to bring the whole nation under a single rule, superior to all sects, all factions. The throes of fifty years, and above all the late war, have made the people of Italy into a nation. The task that awaits us is to make of that nation a State—to interpret a moral idea into fact—a hierarchy of individual responsibility whose every member, from highest to lowest, feels his special duty to be a high privilege. This task, a chapter in historic development, is not the work of two months, perhaps not of two years. But this is our goal; and in our every decision, our every gesture, we must keep it in view: to build up a single and united State, the sole depository of all our past history and of our future, of all the strength of the Italian nation. An arduous and difficult task! But life is not worth living if one does not face such tasks; the harder they are, the more satisfaction there is in having faced them. No, I am sure of it, we shall not disappoint the hopes of the people of Italy."—From a speech to his colleagues, January 1, 1923.

in correspondence with the national character, especially co-operation and communal action. Through the community and through co-operation —both as institutions and principles—he sees a national civilization evolving. It is the aspiration, ever more widely diffused, for that "greater life" that gives meaning, function, and position to the various activities and institutions, and harmonizes them into unity; not from a mechanical uniformity imposed from above by suppressing, legally or illegally, certain classes and their functions—can spring the "National Being," but from a master-idea. Unless national ideals are created which will dominate the policy of statesmen, the activity of citizens, social organization, and the administration of State departments, and unite in one spirit urban and rural life, we shall have achieved the mechanism only of nationality; the spirit will have eluded us.

A.E.'s vision and method, at the same time idealistic and practical, liberates us from the materialist conception, from the habit of making everything in society depend chiefly on economic factors and motives, and of attributing but slight influence to others, and convinces us that not through class struggles but through a co-ordination of function in obedience to a high national ideal—may true social life be created.

The study of these two statesmen illuminates surprisingly the motives of Fascism. Still, to some extent, incoherent, they have a central impulse—the national idea—and it is this which generates, in its turn, the determination to extricate Italy from chaos, to give her a moral unity, to make

of her a new State. Fascism sprang up amid conditions which contain, on the one hand, elements similar in many respects, to those that, in the time of Machiavelli, necessitated energetic action and the use of organized violence, for the unification of Italy and, on the other, to those institutions and ideals, the conscious use of which A.E. advises for the building up of a true national civilization.

The circumstances of its birth explain why Fascism makes use—simultaneously and alternatively—according to the exigencies of the moment, of both kinds of method—the Absolute, dictatorial and militarist, prescribed by Machiavelli, and those of social reconstruction advised by A.E.

Blending the two theories, just as the two epochs from which they arose are so singularly blended at the present time, we can understand the Fascist army, its ruthless violence against those "Baronies" and other bodies and men that it considered as obstacles to the spiritual and material unification of the Nation and its transformation, after the conquest of power, into a recognized voluntary militia. The army was needed to create political unity and was afterwards transformed into a species of voluntary body to uphold, and when need arose, to defend the Government at the work of Nation-building, to defend it even against its own undisciplined followers. The blend of the two theories explains why, after destroying "the red strongholds" and dispersing their defenders, Fascism seeks to gain the support and good will of the masses, of those very masses that had been hitherto denounced as "anti-national"; it requires them not as masses only, but as the creators

of institutions, the depositories of qualities and capabilities, without which national unity would be lifeless and social stability unattainable. Fascist Guilds and Fascist Trade Unions seem to blend strangely with the new national militia, recruited mostly from Fascist elements, unless we realize the singular blending of conditions of our time.

While the Fascist leaders have certainly learned from Machiavelli, none of them, unfortunately, have read A.E.; and yet, in many ways, they think and propose to act in his spirit. This is due to the fact that most of them come from Socialism and Syndicalism, the same schools of thought and action from which A.E. and all our generation have absorbed much, while rejecting that rigid system of economic and social doctrine which imprisoned the Socialists themselves and sterilized their creed.

A.E. dreams of a true social system, and helps to create it, without ever losing himself in the labyrinth of Socialist and Syndicalist theory, and without hampering himself by the adoption of their special modes of action. He believes—and he acts upon the belief—that unless the new Society is prepared for in the mind and character of the people, in their mode of living and their institutions —it will have no feature of permanence.

The Fascisti, like A.E., look forward to a Society whose permanent and characteristic feature will be collaboration among the various classes and functions for the common good, and their aim is to start this collaboration at once and to make of it a practical method of nation-building.

To introduce deliberately the methods of the

future, and set them to work to-day, is surely a new way of pushing ahead. It is not, as many seem to think, a compromise to protect and maintain the *status quo*, or, worse still, to return to the past, but an experiment justified by the failure of all other methods.

It is true that "the abolition of the class struggle" is a slogan that suggests humbug and false sentiment. Socialism seeks to end the class struggle in a final clash between classes which will lead to a new Society: Fascism believes that a new Society can be created only by the actual collaboration of classes. What differentiates Fascism from other social experiments is that it actually creates organizations aiming at the elimination of the class struggle, by bringing the classes together on some common ground. This common ground is, in the first instance, that vivid sense of the identity of interest which, according to A.E., is the basis of citizenship, and without which there can be no noble national life. It is not by preaching it that Fascism tries to bring about the community of interest, but by new methods of organization and by reforms that may give a new start in social development.

The two most important reforms that Fascism is urging at present are the same which, in A.E.'s view, are indispensable in order to create a truly democratic State: Vocational Parliaments and a system of stable and efficient government. The Vocational Parliament, already promised by the Government, will represent all functions in the country—not only those of employers and wage-earners—and would deal with all problems relating

to them, having, it would seem, even legislative power. There is also under discussion a new system of government, sufficiently safe from parliamentary manœuvres to carry out policies in the interest of the country, and able, therefore, to secure efficiency in public administration. These are provisions that our politicians have hitherto discussed to death, but have never seriously attempted to realize: they are embodied in the constitution of the Irish Free State, and A.E. sees in them possibilities for a true social order.

The new method of organization introduced by Fascism takes form in a system of national Corporations based on a functional grouping of all classes interested in a trade or industry, and on voluntary corps for various activities. These two forms of organization represent the principles of collaboration and voluntary public service, two principles considered by A.E. instrumental in the building up of a true social order and of the spirit that must pervade it. We shall discuss these forms of organization in the last chapter.

Our account, though necessarily a mere outline of the circumstances and events that have brought Fascism into power, will serve, I think, to show the risks and difficulties of the Italian situation, and the deep meaning and wide implications of the Fascist Movement. To dismiss it with a pronouncement based simply on repugnance to the brutal episodes of civil war that blackened its first appearance is to deal most inadequately with a complex phenomenon of vital importance. "Just as the lamentations of Romain Rolland were

out of touch with the tragic reality of the Great War, that followed the dictates of a profound and inscrutable fatality, so the condemnation of Fascism for its misdeeds and for its association with the protection of middle-class interests from the attacks of Labour will in no way serve to explain the origin and inner meaning of the flood of Fascist violence. Beneath this violence, the outcome of youthful impulse, there must be something answering to the spiritual and economic conditions of the day, and if we want to understand the phenomenon we must try to find out what that *something* is."[1]

Fascism is no transitory or one-sided phenomenon. The enormous extent of the power which it wields already, and the fact that it has known how to appeal in different ways to different strata of the population, not to one class only, and how to effect a change in their disposition and outlook shows that it is at once deep-rooted and many-sided. There is no likelihood that its influence will be exhausted by a mere change of Government. It sprang originally from certain causes which have all along favoured its development so that it is bound to become a stabilizing and formative influence in Italy, whether or no it be the Government of the country.

"The causes of the success of Fascism are of various kinds, some fundamental, some accidental.

"The essential thing to recognize is that Fascism has been able to grow and triumph with such vehemence and rapidity because, more than any other movement or party, it suited the political

[1] Feuerbach, in *La Critica Politica*, February 25, 1922.

and economic necessities of the time and the country." [1]

Its rise was largely due to the failure of the revolution, the revival of the middle class, and the spread of patriotism, but the amazing suddenness of its accession to power resulted from a general feeling of the need for some real State control to guard public interests against the selfishness of individuals of any and every class.

Fascism, and especially Mussolini, was aware of this "craving for State guardianship while it was still inarticulate; already spreading rapidly in all classes of Society, but not definite enough to become a real support to the 'State,' that is to say, to the welfare of the community which was being stifled and undermined in all sorts of ways for private gain" (F. Weiss). It was Fascism that gave voice and form to this craving by means of organization and action.

Another important cause of its success is that, though it was opposed to Social-Communism, it was not opposed to Labour, and that though national, its policy was not imperial.

Its insistence on the Nation answered to an ideal need, an objective necessity. We must not forget that all the attempts that had been made by politicians, whether of the old school or revolutionaries, to solve world problems after the war on an international basis, had utterly failed, so that every State had been obliged to find a way for itself to solve its own urgent problems.

This necessity occurred alike in politics and

[1] Franz Weiss (Socialist): "Cause Remote e Prossime dell Avento Fascista," in *Critica Sociale*, March 1, 1923.

economics. Fascist Nationalism has its parallel in the agitating events of other countries. Lenin, Kemal, Zaglul, Ghandi, d'Annunzio, A.E., Mussolini, are but exponents of the same course of development in the varying circumstances of their different countries. Each of these men sought in action or in theory to bring in a new national order, to liberate his country from foreign slavery and internal thraldom, to awaken within it a conscious national unity.

National unification was called for in economics as in politics. In both fields Internationalism had failed. Industrialism, which had seemed to unite the whole world in a single civilization was breaking up, and each country was inclined to follow its own independent interests and to adopt protection and a national economy. The course of events was being reversed and methods were changing. The attempt was being made to stabilize production and exchange by developing home trade: "a self-supporting country" was becoming more and more the ideal, and a protectionist policy almost universal.

Into this process Fascism fitted admirably. In order to further an economic system within the limits, so far as possible, of the country itself, "national unification was necessary—the submission of each country to a single national rule."[1] And Fascism set itself the task of effecting this unification, divining that it had become a question of life and death—that without unity government was impossible. As in the war, everything must

[1] A. Labriola: "Alla ricerca della cause ed Accenno ai Rimedi Possibili," in *Critica Sociale*, January 16, 1923.

give way to public interests : order must be established and an iron discipline. Transport, production, and State action must be well organized and continuous. This must be effected, as in war-time, by State control, modified by peace conditions, that is to say, developing new functions of direction for the State and incorporating Labour activities within it. As we have seen, the directing class had lost command of the situation and were incapable of carrying on under the new conditions of functional democracy, but revolutionary methods had also failed : enter Fascism and the strong arm.

With the conquest of power, Fascism entered upon its true task—to reorganize the work of the country as a single unit.

" Fascism has taken possession of the government—the organs that direct the State. To-day it is preparing to take possession of the State. State and government are not separate entities. To conquer the State is to transform the unanimous support which the Nation has till now accorded to us into a permanent and effective force. To conquer the State is to organize for higher and collective purposes the entire energy and capacity of the people ; to further in every possible manner the transformation of institutions, accepting such transformation not in obedience to a law imposed from outside, but from an inner sense of the urgency and moral necessity of such a change." [1]

It will stand or fall by its fulfilment of the task before it : in the first place it must save the country from ruin, whether by dictatorship,

[1] Dino Grandi, in *Gerarchia*, November 1922.

persuasion, or consent ; in the second place, it must make use, to the utmost of its resources, the capabilities and institutions of the people and all their latent patriotism so as to build up a national unit of productive enthusiasm for the common good that will need no dictatorship.

Fascism is revolutionary, not because it seized power by illegal means, but because by means of its dictatorship it is constructing a functional democracy. This is no clearly formulated Fascist policy.

The term " functional democracy " and all that it implies is well understood in England and other countries, but it is unknown in Italy. If the Fascisti knew it they would, I believe, adopt it, and it would throw light on their programme.

Many circumstances that have helped to determine that programme, especially since the close of the Civil War, indicate clearly that this is the direction that their policy is likely to take. They see that what they have to do is to create an efficient Nation, and starting from the principle that national unity is essential, they are well aware that it is out of the question that one class should be sacrificed to another or one part of the country to another part. Fascism has no anti-Labour bias and understands full well that no Government can be permanent that is in opposition to the proletariate, just as it would be out of the question to sacrifice completely the bourgeoisie or the propertied classes ; it avoids, on the one hand, the mistake made by reactionaries in most countries of attempting to crush Labour and, on the other, that of the Socialists who believe in the possibility

of suppressing Capitalism and its functions at a stroke.

To avoid the dangers of partiality, which would be fatal to it, Fascism stiffens itself in a dictatorship; that method of government alone being able to avoid the danger of giving way to one class or the other, and to afford the strength required for co-ordinating and stabilizing their functions in the interest of the community. Until the forms of functional democracy have been worked out a dictatorship seems to be the only possible form in which Fascism can rule the State.

Political Democracy is not sufficiently robust to effect its own transformation into Functional Democracy. Hence the antipathy of Fascism for the Parliamentarianism of to-day, an antipathy which is often interpreted as a tendency to Absolutism, whereas it is, in fact, nothing but the effort to discover a form of government more suited to modern needs, just as the dictatorship is merely an expedient for fostering the development of organizations adapted to the work that has to be undertaken by a modern Government.

Fascism has achieved the amazing feat of becoming a national movement without much insistence on a definite programme, and—still more remarkable—the greater number of its followers has not troubled about a programme at all. The official programme of the National Fascist Party (*vide* Appendix II) was the least discussed aspect of the movement. It is significant, too, that no sooner had it come into power, than friends and

foes alike began to ask: "But, after all, what does it stand for?" "What does it mean to do?" And the Fascisti themselves did not quite know how to answer.

Even to-day (April 1923), after being in power for five months, warm discussions are still being carried on as to the fundamental principles which should underlie Fascist government, although its action follows, in the main, the programme laid down in 1922, which again is on very much the same lines as that of the Fasci in 1919. It is indeed a fact—though paradoxical—that a movement, said to be without programme, has really got one, and follows it, whereas those parties and movements which, during the last few years have drawn up many comprehensive programmes, have not carried out the smallest part of them.

While all parties and movements are busy just now revising their demands and considering their position with regard to Fascism, their points of agreement or disagreement with it, how they can oppose it or collaborate with it, Fascism itself, though seeking to define its position more closely, goes on in its own course, "exerts itself to govern and to hold a position above economic and political conflicts, the position of a moral force on the side of reform and renewal." [1]

If this written programme does not seem to explain the enormous driving force that brought them into power and, still less, to justify all the ways in which that force acted, in other words, if action was disproportionate to programme, still

[1] Don L. Sturzo, leader of the Popular Party, in his book *Riforma Statale Indirizzi Politici*, Firenze, 1923.

less can one understand the need for a dictatorship to carry out so modest a programme.

It follows that there must be, before and beyond the programme, some other moving force in Fascism, something which swept so many adherents to its standard and, at the same time, made its course of action difficult. This something was a master-idea—the Nation. This was the idea that Fascism came to personify, and that drove it to ruthless action.

It had not those extensive programmes with which all the other movements after the war were so profusely furnished, nor was it so ready with the promises of solution of all the urgent problems of the time, but it had one predominant idea and a fixed determination to translate it into action—just what the other movements lacked.[1]

After the war the popular imagination was somewhat chaotic, drawn this way and that by irreconcilable ideas and without the direction of a definite aim or a determined will, whereas the ruling classes had a definite aim—that of saving their possessions. There could therefore be no clear conception of the State which is, or should be, a reflection of the will and imagination of the people.

The first thing to do was to restore the spirit of the race, of the nation; without this, it was not the least use to make detailed programmes for reorganizing the State. "The State is the physical body prepared for the incarnation of the

[1] "It is by a predominating idea that nations achieve the practical unity of their citizens, and national progress becomes possible."—*National Being*, p. 101.

soul of the race" says A.E. If the race has no conscious life of its own, it is impossible to give life and form to the State, or only a life that is artificial and precarious.

Long before it came into power Fascism had declared that the majority in the country must agree upon some common ground, otherwise the State could not take up any definite position and, as we have seen, it had succeeded in finding this common ground in the recognition and rebirth of the Nation.

The idea of the Nation had already influenced a small minority, as during the *Risorgimento,* and had, indeed, created a new Italy, but its influence was never widely felt, and time had weakened it. After the war, Fascism did more than anything else to revive it, in all classes, thus creating a new situation, with new impulses, which served to give an entirely new aspect to the idea of the State.

It does not really matter how this new idea of the Nation became so powerful, the important thing is that it did become powerful. Among the indifferent of the middle class it awoke an interest in the history of their country and aroused some feeling of class-responsibility; while those classes which had been international in sympathy and had laid but little stress on national community, were roused to new modes of thinking and acting. In many cases this idea of the Nation was first and foremost, but there were others where it was grafted on other vital ideas or tendencies. Such was the case with the Trade Union Movement, and hence the origin of National Trade

Unionism, founded on the belief that it was not possible to create a new social order by means of the class war, but that it must be brought about by the union of all the elements of production, not by one alone—the various ideas and aspirations strengthening one another by interpenetration and joint action. If this tendency could be developed on a national scale, we might hope to see that transformation of the social order on a national basis, founded on the character and institutions of the people, which we had hoped for after the war.

We have said that with its conquest of power Fascism started the process of unification. It had still to strengthen that process by its government—political and economic ; a unification by force had to become one of willing consent, by means of accepted fact, of new organizations and institutions. And along with this went the new principle of collaboration of classes—not merely in Parliament for the making of laws, but in the country for action—for the performance of common tasks. "National Trade Unionism" and "the Parliament of Labour and Production" would be the means, as we have said, of this collaboration, and the State would need to be reconstituted so that it might assist and support it.

That which made the victory of Fascism so easy—the sympathy of all those directly interested in the downfall of the proletariate, red and white—is also the most serious obstacle to the development, later on, of its national policy. After the present period of transition, which is necessarily short,

when the State is obliged to turn to these people for support and assistance and therefore to permit them to gather rich spoils—the only thing that appeals to them—they will prove refractory to discipline and quite unwilling to sacrifice themselves for the Nation.

To-day the State asks for sacrifices from Labour for the restoration of national production, though it is well aware that such sacrifices will enrich the capitalists rather than the community, because it is forced to do so since most capitalists would not work unless they were allowed to make big profits, and their work is, for the moment, indispensable.

It seems to many that the Fascist dictatorship stands for economic liberty, for capitalists, and against liberty for the workers and political liberty. Whereas its action is really determined by special and temporary circumstances and may take on a very different aspect when things are more settled and the State can begin more constructive work. When that time comes, those who are now most delighted with the dictatorship will try to release themselves from their pledges and from the discipline imposed on them as sympathizers with National Trade Unionism and political Fascism. Many of the most ostentatious friends of Fascism, when it was in its destructive phase, will be its bitter foes when it becomes constructive, and will need to be either educated up to the sacrifices demanded by the dictatorship or forced to make them.

" The strong State has an instinctive tendency to interfere with private property. If the Fascist

State lasts, as is very likely, we shall see it making the most radical experiments of social reform. The plutocracy should beware,"[1] writes Labriola, and the editor of *Il Popolo* (a Popular-Catholic organ) is of the same opinion. "It would not surprise me if Mussolini, some day or other, should attack the ancient guardians of unused capital, and actually, for reasons of State, should expropriate them—*horribile dictu*—for the President of the council understands, better than anyone, that wealth is to be used for the good of the community and that its use or abuse to their detriment must not be permitted.

"Perhaps if that happens, there will be shrieks from the philo-Fascisti. You may be pretty sure, however, that the working class will approve, because they will see in it an instalment of Socialism and of a Christian organization of Society" (April 5, 1923).

The master-idea of the Nation had a persuasive force in the crucial period preceding the conquest of power. But from that moment it was not enough to be with the Nation "in emotional relationship," as A.E. says one must also act for her. The master-idea had to be transformed into a master-motive for action. The Nation myth must provoke deeds on her behalf, not only on the part of the Government, but of individual citizens, otherwise the enthusiasm would wear out, just as it did after the war, because there was no longer a demand for action, since Government assigned no national tasks. The same thing happened with

[1] A. Labriola, ex-minister (Socialist), *Critica Sociale*, April 1, 1923.

the "myth" of Communism; it wore thin because it had no counterpart in reality and fact.

Henceforth the idea of the Nation must have a backbone of reality. Men must realize the meaning of such words as Nation, patriotism, unity, and the demands for actual service that they make on us. If unity does not take form in united action it remains merely a geographical fact; on the other hand, it can become real and functional only through a reorganization of the State. It must be the work of the State to create the forms, the functions, the environment by means of which unity may cease to be a mere form and may become the expression of a real and living community.

The mere affirmation of patriotism as a master-idea is no longer enough, it must accept discipline; the national consciousness must become a working ideal, must be materialized in duty, just as it was during the war, but more nobly. It must become a permanent stimulus to action for the common good.

When Fascism defines patriotism thus—and indeed it has already begun so to define it, though not in the same words—it will demand services and sacrifices for public ends and it will find that many of its so-called friends are shirkers—while those who were looked on as enemies of the Nation are among the most ready to work for her, as indeed they have done in the past, notwithstanding their label of Internationalism. I mean all those workers who have been building up a new social structure in their Trade Unions, and Co-operatives who are accustomed to sacrifice,

who are trained to a life of service to the community.

Fascism realized that, just as a disunited people could not defend themselves against danger from without, so also they were incapable in time of peace by developing a civilized life. For this reason they made great efforts to bring in those that held aloof and to rouse the national consciousness; it was necessary to retain the dictatorship, because there are still great difficulties to be surmounted and much opposition from every class before the national unity, which is still somewhat forced and unreal, can become permanent and functional.

Fascism insists on the necessity for a dictatorship; it refuses to try again any of the traditional political systems which have, undoubtedly, failed to withstand the supreme test. It considers that the party system is a thing of the past. It has been well said that "Fascism is not merely a reaction; it marks the end of an epoch."[1] It is a time of crisis for all parties. The world is moving on; Fascism has nothing in common with the programmes of the past.

Fascism has no special theory, does not represent the triumph of any particular political system or doctrine, but rather a reaction against all those systems that have ruined Italian political life. Thus it is worth recording that the reason why it opposed Social-Communism was not so much because it had a more practicable system to set up in its place, as because, at the time being, the revolution could

[1] O. Zuccarini, in *Critica Politica*, March 25, 1923.

not be successful and threatened to be the ruin of the country. It was reconstruction that was needed for the salvation of Italy.

Fascism, we repeat, although it has theories, is not a system; this is one of the reasons of its success. Theories arise out of facts and not facts out of theories, and Fascism moulds itself, day by day, by means of daily action and experience.

It insists on true national unity and collective economic prosperity, but this determination is not tied down by any preconceived methods, political or social; it reserves the right to choose its own ways of thinking and acting its own solution for problems as they arise.

Fascism has recently absorbed the Nationalist Party, a fairly numerous body, till then more or less in competition with it, and requiring some suppression. The Nationalists pride themselves on the fact that Fascism has absorbed their ideas—ultra-nationalist, plutocratic and imperialist—as well as their members. But Fascism will not hear of taking Nationalist ideas as a loan. "You can give us troops, men, and values," said Mussolini to the Nationalists, "but you must not suppose that Fascism has to come to you for theories. That would be a great mistake. The gifts of Fascism to Italy are new and original, National Trade Unionism, for instance, which is the antithesis of Marxist Trade Unionism with its inexorable rules."

It has taken its stand in opposition to Parliamentary Democracy and to the Parliaments of to-day, because they achieve only temporary expedients.

"After having struck at Socialist organizations and democratic institutions, they hurl themselves with renewed energy on the tree of Liberal traditions and try to drag it up by the roots—both in theory and in the political sphere. Being still a movement and nothing but a movement, they try to take their bearings in the surrounding chaos to define their action, to take their ground on solid principle, to find a firm basis to build on. Leaving the full stream of Liberalism and reform—of which they wished to be both index and reformer, to take part in it and make an end of it—they obeyed that law of necessity, of fatality which rules all social movements, and followed their course, of which it is as yet impossible, through the profusion of romantic and resonant phrases, to foresee what the end will be.

"In Fascism there are still elements of uncertainty, an opening for all sorts of possibilities." [1]

Fascism opposes Liberalism which helped it to attain power, but which now does not see how it can reconcile itself to the dictatorship. The chief organ of Italian Liberalism writes thus: The party now in power has no definite programme; "it is the tumultuous and overwhelming exponent of a healthy and widespread revival of the national conscience, but it is still oscillating between a vague kind of Trade Unionism and economic Liberalism, and it is still uncertain how to embody both of them in any political regime" (*Corriera della Sera,* March 17, 1923).

"Tell us, you who are trying to reconstruct differently," writes the same journal, "what is

[1] Editorial in *Avanti,* March 31, 1923.

your scheme? Whither do you wish to lead us? What kind of Government do you mean to give us? As you have not yet decided what wonder-working formula to give us, we will make the best of what we have got." The Liberals are ready with their paternal advice to Fascism to restore "gradually" the traditional constitutional regime, "to bring back normal conditions," and they declare that "it was the conscience of the Nation that strengthened Fascism and opened its way to success," and that if it persists in the dictatorship, that support will cease.

The weakness of the Liberal position is shown by the fact that it admits the merits of the dictatorship; but the Fascisti, nevertheless, reject their advice, declaring that Liberalism has been tested and has failed and that therefore its arguments are not valid; they say, too, that large sections of the population are turning definitely towards Fascism and its methods; and that Liberals fail to understand them.

In fact, writes a Fascist author, it is characteristic of Fascism that it did not make choice, a priori, between Liberal and Conservative political principles. "Liberalism and anti-Liberalism sound like contradictory terms in the ears of Liberals who do not understand Fascism and who think they know all about it, but in reality they are two expressions for a single desire which is unfortunately identical—that of ruling Italy in every way and at any cost.

"To-day, in Italy, to rule, means one thing and one only—to save."

Mussolini, in the following article, which was

much commented on in Italy and abroad, attacks the Liberals, as they had first attacked him, accusing them of thinking that Liberalism possesses an indisputable, scientific truth, applicable in all circumstances and in every time and place.

"This is the absurdity. Liberalism is not the last word; it does not represent any final and decisive formula in the art of government. In this difficult and delicate art which deals with the most refractory of materials, not stationary, but always in movement since it deals with the living and not the dead; in this art of politics there is no Aristotelian unity, of time, of place, and of action. Men have been governed, more or less fortunately, in a thousand different ways. Liberalism is the contribution, the method, of the nineteenth century, which is not stupid as Daudet considers, because there are not stupid centuries and intelligent centuries, but in every century an alternation, in greater or smaller proportion of intelligence and stupidity. It cannot be said that Liberalism, a method of government good for the nineteenth century, for a century, that is to say, dominated by two essential phenomena like the development of Capitalism and the growth of the sentiment of nationality should be necessarily suited to the twentieth century, which already betrays characteristics differing considerably from those of its predecessor. Facts outweigh books; experience is worth more than theory. To-day the most striking of post-war experiences, those that are taking place before our eyes, are marked by the defeat of Liberalism. Events in Russia and in Italy demonstrate the possibility of

governing altogether outside the ideology of Liberalism and in a manner entirely opposed to it. Communism and Fascism have nothing to do with Liberalism.

But, after all, what is this Liberalism, which all the enemies of Fascism are now championing, more or less directly? Does Liberalism mean universal suffrage and such like? Does it mean Parliament in continuous session, so that it may afford the indecorous spectacle that has sickened us all? Does it mean that, in the name of liberty, we are to give freedom to the few to kill the liberty of all the rest? Does it mean that we are to leave at large those who announce their hostility to the State and who are working actively for its demolition? Is this what Liberalism is? Very well, if this is Liberalism, it is the theory and practice of humiliation and ruin. Liberty is not an end ; it is a means. As a means it requires control and governance. Now is the time to speak of ' Force.'

" I beg you to tell me, you, gentlemen of Liberal principles, if ever in the course of history there has been a Government which based itself exclusively on the consent of the people and renounced any resort to force. Such a Government there never has been and never will be. The consent of the people is shifting like the sands on the seashore. It can never be continuous. Nor can it ever be complete. No Government has ever existed that has made all its subjects happy. Whatever solution you find to any problem, you will be sure—even if you have a share of the divine wisdom !—to make some

malcontents. If geometricians have not succeeded in squaring the circle, still less have politicians. If it be admitted that any Government action is sure to make some people discontented, how are you going to prevent the discontent from spreading and becoming a danger to the stability of the State? You will prevent it by force. By having on your side the greatest force. By the inexorable use of that force when necessary. Take away from a Government any kind of force—I mean physical force, armed force—and leave it with only its immortal principles and that Government will be at the mercy of the first organized group that decides to make an end of it. Fascism, once for all, is getting rid of these anti-vital theories. When a group or a party gets into power, it becomes its duty to strengthen its defences against all and sundry. The truth, apparent to everyone whose eyes are not blinded by dogmatism, is that men are perhaps weary of liberty. They have had a surfeit of it. Liberty is no longer the virgin, chaste and severe, fought for by the generations at the beginning of last century. For the intrepid youth, restless and eager, who present themselves at this new dawn of history, there are other words that move them more deeply: such as order, hierarchy,[1] discipline. In Italy, this poor Liberalism which fights and sighs for a wider liberty, is sadly behindhand. It is entirely out of touch with the possibilities and realities of the time. They talk of seeds that will spring to life in the

[1] This word "gerarchia" is the title of the Fascist organ from which this article is taken; it seems to imply *deputed functional authority*.—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

spring. Nonsense! Some seeds perish under the pall of winter. Fascism, which was not afraid to call itself reactionary when many of the present-day Liberals were lying prone before triumphant communism, does not hesitate to-day to call itself illiberal and anti-Liberal. Fascism is not going to fall a victim to any childish tricks.

"Know then, once for all, that Fascism recognizes no idols, adores no fetishes; it has already passed over the more or less decayed body of the goddess Liberty, and is quite prepared, if necessary, to do so once more."[1]

These rough words must not be taken literally, that is to say, not as implying the permanence of a fierce dictatorship.[2] They serve to mark with precision the essential points of divergence from the principles and methods of Liberals.[3] Italian Liberals are all more or less friendly to Fascism—a sign of the strangeness of the situation—but some of them are for sticking to traditional institutions, and want to make Fascism do the same, while others, on the other hand, try to twist Liberal theories so as to make them justify

[1] Benito Mussolini: "Forza e Consenso," in *La Gerarchia*, March, 1923.

[2] Mussolini himself said, in an interview with the Parisian paper *L'Exelsior*: "That the opinions expressed in this article must not be considered as dogmas, but as expressions of the needs of to-day, which may, to-morrow, become relative."

[3] On the other hand, I do not examine here, as I have mentioned already, the intrinsic merit of political doctrines. Facts, as we see them, are not the outward expression of hard and fast political doctrine; it would be nearer the truth to say that political doctrine varies with the experience that comes from action.

the high-handed acts of Fascism, just as they tried to justify the action of the former Government that was friendly to Socialism. But Fascism has neither time nor patience to expend in long discussions, nor any wish to hamper itself with diluted theories, and therefore proclaims action and the necessity of creating a new kind of justice since you cannot restore the old.

One of their publicists writes: "Fascism will be able to theorize and discuss as soon as it has actually done the chief part of its constructive work. For the present, the Government goes its own way, without stopping to theorize about its own action, leaving it for the historians of the future to gather into a brilliant synthesis these manifestations in practice of a new directing intelligence.

"A new directing intelligence, that is what counts. For the first time the State has become for Italians a living and present reality, developing a national character of its own, and casting aside all those hindrances, legislative and bureaucratic, which had served to divide the citizen from the man, the Government from the country, and Rome from the districts and provinces where the most genuine and valuable characteristics of our Italian people are still preserved intact. For the first time localism disappears and the unifying experiment of the Great War is continued and decided in the Fascist State. To those adversaries who talk about the quarrels and misunderstandings of Fascism we may bring forward the example of districts which have been accustomed to the fiercest party quarrels, like the Romagna, where

by virtue of Fascism, traditional antagonisms have been happily ended and there is now every sign of union among the workers.[1]

"How have they been able to achieve this? By giving to the mass of the people the certainty that the State is in touch with the people, the best of the people, the directing minority in the region, the province, the commune. If this has not been achieved by means of Parliament, it has been achieved by means of the organs which the Fascist State has created during its two years of formative revolution and which enable it to face with tranquility the experiment of power.

"The National Militia and functional groups, all the Fascist organs, Trade Unionist and political: these form the scheme of a State, born by spontaneous generation, supported by a hierarchy which has arisen naturally from the free play of individual aptitudes. And even if one does not see in this new political structure the real meaning and substance of a State, one must at least admit that it affords a far better and more actual connection between State and country than is afforded by Liberal institutions. The abject behaviour of recent Parliaments and the

[1] Romagna is a region of Italy that has been convulsed periodically by political passion. It is curious that Machiavelli, in order to justify the cruel methods of Cæsar Borgia, says that "undoubtedly this cruelty of his had been of use in the Romagna, had united it, and brought back peace and faith to it (*Il Principe*, chap. xvii). The Fascisti, with their "Forza e Consenso," have not as yet succeeded in realizing complete unity among the workers in the Romagna, but they are on the way to doing so. This may have important results on Fascist Trade Unionism, but of this we shall speak in the next chapter.

hypertrophy of the bureaucracy prove this clearly enough.

"We have said that for the first time the State is not that terrible thing that one learns to hate in the schools, the State of stamped official forms, of examinations, and all sorts of worries, but the promoter of individual initiative, the champion of national rights, a State that is youthful, agile, virile, such as a great people need. Signor Mussolini does not rest on his laurels, nor is he content with results already gained, however great. No sooner had he arrived at Rome than he prepared to give to Italy a new State. He spoke at once of a Fascist State to the great scandal of uncompromising Liberals, while others, compromisers, waited for the hurricane to pass and for the ordinary evils of a new ministry, the traditions of bureaucracy, the difficulties of the Government to break down good intentions, chill enthusiasms, and get the better of these youthful and magnificent ambitions.

"But these new men were not of a temper to be easily deceived or corrupted; and were more inclined to give a new direction to the work of government than to be caught in the old trammels. They knew that they had behind them, in the country, the strength of great organized masses. Liberalism, lacking this source of strength, had been forced to give way to this party or that, representing the people, to the Socialists, the Popular Party, and the rest. One may add that the frank profession of Catholicism bestowed on the Fascist State that spiritual unity which Liberalism lacked with its agnosticism and

neutrality. It seems strange that anyone should think it possible to govern Italy legitimately without the support of the masses or of the great Catholic tradition which alone can render the national tradition complete and continuous. It might be possible as long as the people were without a political sense, but when the war had taught them their right to share in the government in order to defend the fruits of victory and to prevent new blunders, it became necessary to substitute a Government and a State that would respect the character of the Nation, for one that oppressed and deformed it. To pretend to govern from above and outside parties is really equivalent to favouring first one party and then another, whichever happens to be strongest.

"When some Liberal of the old school writes that the Italians are not forty millions of helots to be governed authoritatively, one feels like asking him whether he really thinks that government, by a minority having no voice in the country, would be less arbitrary and illegal—a minority which thought of itself as a party for just a week before the election, ending in a dogmatism which hardly tallied with the stingy instinct of the Conservatives in some parts of the bourgeoisie. Party government, by all means, but by a party like Fascism, which is inclined to identify itself with the Nation, is Trade Unionist and Catholic, and which, in fine, does not consider the State as an enemy to be outwitted and exploited, but as the juridical and political voice of the Nation.

"As to the method of government, the distinction between liberty, fraternity, humanity, on

the one hand, and authority and discipline on the other, is altogether too inept to be used as the basis of a new doctrine. Liberty and authority are inseparably bound together as motives that concur to produce a single volition. A new rhetoric of the extreme right would only end in making itself as much disliked as that of the humanitarian, democratic, and Socialist type. Sovereignty, before it can be a political and historical reality, implies a moral conquest of the citizen, of the individual, in the State: and nothing would be more unjust than to disturb this great and unfortunate people, at a moment so critical, when they are just regaining the mastery of their fate. But it is nevertheless true that, at certain moments of a Nation's history, dictatorship is necessary ; it is essential to turn men's thoughts in the direction of authority as well as of liberty.

"We are, of course, dealing with temporary and transitory aspects ; for the Government suffers as much from the extremists who distort its intentions, making what is simply a gradual, careful, and intelligent restoration appear like a Terrorist autocracy, as from the upholders of discredited Utopias who praise past times with a zeal worthy of a better cause." [1]

Although it is clear, as we have seen, that Fascism has not spared some of those political currents that profess to be democratic, and though it turns against parliamentary government in its present form, yet it is by no means hostile to parliamentary rule as such. Its criticism of it is much the same as that of the Syndicalists.

[1] Francesco Meriano, in the *Resto del Carlino* of April 1, 1923.

Parliamentary rule, as we know it, based on universal suffrage, is democratic in theory only; the method in which members are chosen and elected and especially the way in which the Government is appointed pays no heed to the ideas, the functions, or the needs of the electors. It is special groups and special interests that get the upper hand in Parliament.

This system really makes democracy a fraud. It destroys any consciousness of responsibility in the citizens, and makes them think of the State as something to be deceived and exploited. Political Democracy cannot get to the bottom of things because it has to pretend to treat everyone alike; it cannot differentiate between the various complex functions, choosing out those men and those functions that are indispensable for the creation of a truly and effectively democratic Society. Political democracy must not be confused with that democratic sentiment which should control all human relations, but which is quite in harmony with a system of functional authority (gerarchia).

Political democracy has failed in every country. A.E., who is certainly neither Fascist nor Syndicalist, but one of the most profoundly democratic thinkers of our time, recognizes this failure, which is proved by the fact that after a long spell of democratic rule, many aspects of feudal landlordism still survive, while financial plutocracy has been able to come into existence and assume its present proportions.

The masses vote, but they have nothing to do with the machinery of the State. They remain

entirely outside it. The hollowness of the cant about popular control over law-making and administration under political democracy is too well known to need insisting on. It has certainly been one of the causes of Italy's undoing.

Fascism shows up the deception of political democracy with its sham liberty, that has reigned in Italy for many decades without giving to the Nation any real substantial democracy of fact, relation, or function. It has used temporary expedients only, patching up Society from the outside so that the " National Being " was too vague and feeble to inspire men with high policy in time of peace while, in time of war, it could bring only panic, frenzy, and delirium—to paraphrase A.E.'s description of democracy in an ill-constituted social order.[1]

Fascism took up a position definitely opposed to political democracy. And various political democrats, who during the Civil War—like the Liberal and Popular Parties—had not the courage to oppose its illegal action, now cry scandal and say—though always very guardedly—that Fascism is reactionary, conservative, authoritarian.

Fascism troubled little about this accusation. It admitted willingly that it " reacted " against many people who considered that they were further-

[1] " In reality," writes an acute observer, " democracy has never existed in Italy. . . . There has never been anything democratic in Italy except social customs " (G. Prezzolini, " Vecchia e Nuova Democrazia: Rifarsi da Capo," in the *Mondo*, November 14, 1922). We have seen in a preceding chapter how political democracy was incapable of rendering the democratic spirit, diffused throughout the country, operative; of transforming " tolerated " Socialism into the flesh and blood of Society.

ing the progress of the country by making their own business prosperous and improving their own position, but it denied that it was reactionary with regard to real social progress.

Before deciding whether Fascism is, or is not, reactionary, it is important to know whether or not it permits and renders possible the development of a true social order. We cannot form an opinion as to its permanent tendencies merely by discussing its attitude with regard to passing events, because such actions are often determined by pressing problems of the day which must be dealt with immediately.

But when one sees a movement, both before and after it has got into power, deliberately organizing the working masses to be its most strenuous supporters, and desiring that, once organized, they should become the basis of the State, thus accepting the idea that Labour should be incorporated in the State—which is also what A.E. looks for—one cannot honestly stigmatize it as a reactionary and Conservative Government. It may have ideas that we cannot share, but it is not reactionary.

Conservatives in every country and in every period oppose, by every means in their power, the entrance of organized Labour into the sphere of industry or politics. Was it not quite recently that the ruling classes in Great Britain tried to prohibit by law the use of Trade Union funds for political or parliamentary purposes?

In Italy, on the contrary, Labour may undertake anything in a constructive way. Fascism has declared that it wishes to make Labour the centre

of the social order, well knowing that, having achieved this, it will have altered fundamentally the social structure. But it is not blinded by theory: it sees reality; and therefore recognizes that Labour is not synonymous with proletariate. It does not wish to organize Society on a preconceived idea that there are in existence two classes and two only—capitalists and the proletariate—and that they are antagonistic, but on the idea that there are various classes which can exist together co-ordinated in a functional hierarchy.

By means of professional organizations in every branch of production and exchange in which capitalists and merchants would be included—Fascism aims at creating a social order of a higher and more vital quality. It is not obsessed with the idea of keeping certain classes in their place, but of bringing them into close relation with the State for public ends.

Fascism, which grew up as a national movement in opposition to a Socialism which was anti-national, will probably develop into a kind of National Socialism characterized by Guild tendencies of a mediæval type rather than by Collectivism. We come to this conclusion from the fact that while Fascism encourages the development of private capitalist enterprises and of Co-operative Guilds it resolutely opposes State industries.

Fascism may be able to conquer enormous difficulties because obvious solutions are not barred to it by preconceived ideas, and it can therefore regularize new departures. It has already

succeeded in rendering dominant the national ideal and, in connection with the sentiments that are crystallizing round that ideal, it may be able to build up a national social order that has real life in it.

It will not be founded on antagonistic ideals which tend to stultify one another, but on a single and all-pervading principle that is everywhere applicable. When it succeeds in bringing back the proletariate into the Nation and in giving it new rights but not privileges, new responsibilities but not favours, it proves itself to possess a far-sighted constructive vision which Social-Communism and political democracy were entirely devoid of. To ask it to complete the work it has begun for national economy and the social order is to ask it to mould Society from within, and not, as has hitherto been attempted in vain, from without.

Fascism has destroyed, not Socialism but its methods, setting free the living and constructive principle within from the shackles of an inert system. It has opened up for Socialism—if only Socialists will see it—fresh horizons.

It refuses, here again in close agreement with A.E., to give a new lease of life to the democracy of the demagogue which leads, according to varying conditions at one time to plutocracy, at another, to militarism, but never to the well-being of the people whom it pretends to represent. The Society it visualizes is a Society of Labour in which Guilds and Trade Unions, composed by no means entirely of manual workers, will form the structure of Society. It insists, however, at the same time,

on the principle of selection, the competition of ability in place of the competition of class: a functional hierarchy, an aristocracy of capacity must be recognized.

To sum up then, Fascism sees that unless "national unity," engendered by the war, lost by after-war conditions and, at the same time, rendered necessary by them, regained once more by the Civil War, can be made real and permanent, nothing but chaos is to be looked for. To avoid this catastrophe, all measures are admissable—even the dictatorship.

The formidable problem confronting Fascism is, how to get on without the dictatorship, how to render permanent and spontaneous that transient, and sometimes forced, feeling of brotherhood which saved the country during the war and after it was over, how to bring into everyday life that spirit of unity and sacrifice which has been hitherto reserved for times of emergency.

A social order has to be created which will develop public spirit and foster it—which will bring the spirit of unity into Labour. We have learnt during the war, after a fashion, how to create public spirit and how to make it serve the interests of the community. What we have to do is to induce collective and individual activity for the community and the State, for the locality and the Nation. In this way, and in this way only, can new ties be generated and new forms of discipline, and a new spirit breathed into the body politic.

During the war national unity held its own because there was a definite task to stimulate the

spirit of emulation and sacrifice. To-day, too, men speak of the supreme duty of saving the country. But these are times of peace, though only comparative peace. There is not now the military temper and organization which was able to maintain national unity for a long time. Military organization, essentially coercive, must make way for civil organization which is founded on consent. In times of peace civil regulations should be as effective in maintaining order in the work of organization as military, when there is danger from foreign enemies.

"The Nation" must become a reality at work daily before our eyes, embodied in national functions; and it rests with the State, the Government, to define these functions and their sphere of action, and to keep alive the ideals of civil duty and public welfare.

When Fascism transforms her militia of volunteers for the Civil War into a militia of volunteers for civic service it proves that she has found intuitively the right road towards a new civilization, by bringing intelligence to bear on new methods of social reconstruction.[1]

[1] A.E. advises the conscription of young men for the service of the State in a variety of fields, ranging from land reclamation and afforestation to police service, not only to create a devotion to civic ideals in the young, which may influence every action of their lives, but also to carry out the endless public work which could not otherwise be undertaken by the State for lack of funds. This is essentially the same proposal that I made myself in several things I wrote between 1916 and 1920.

CHAPTER VII

THE CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS

FASCISM, which arose from the breaking-up of the State, and with the definite purpose of restoring its equilibrium, has enormous tasks and responsibilities. Although its aim is in some ways a return to past conditions, it cannot re-establish the past. The breaking-up of the State was brought about not only by the pressure of the moment, but also by factors of remote origin forced in the hothouse atmosphere of the war and after-war. Among these factors certain groups of individuals and interests were preponderant ; they were in rebellion each against the other and all against the State, splitting up its territorial unity and rendering any continuous action on its part impossible ; either they acted within local limits or, on the other hand, went so far as to trespass beyond the confines of commune or district. There were groups, too, that had transformed the political parties, so that they are no longer parties in the traditional sense, that is to say capable of coming into power in turn, but consider themselves as having a status of their own exclusive and authoritative.

" To-day the individual has virtually a double

citizenship, by which he belongs to his organization first and foremost, before the State, and thus sacrifices the latter to the higher and more imperative rule to which he is subjected."[1]

The imperfect absorption of this double citizenship into the State has been the ruin of the latter. If a State is to continue to exist it must recognize the double citizenship. This is the problem that overshadows all others. Every kind of State must reckon henceforth with those living organisms which form the basis of this double citizenship, and which are more or less inclined towards autonomy; a solution must be found to this question of the relation between Trade Unions and the State, between districts and the State—some arrangement between autonomy and the federation of those forces which are at the moment still inco-ordinate, which will allow to individuals a voice in the State, both as producers and as citizens, in the widest sense of the word. This problem is not to be passed over: it is imperative to transform the chaotic struggle that is paralysing the State into co-ordinated functions that will restore it to order and activity.

Such then is the State and constitutional crisis which has both produced Fascism and brought it into power. It is obviously not even possible to comprehend the whole import of this crisis, much less to attempt to solve it, in an atmosphere of civil war, and thus, as far as possible, a return to a normal state of affairs must be effected at all costs. The reconstruction of the State from its foundations cannot be undertaken by panic

[1] Guido de Ruggiero, in *Resto del Carlino*, September 2, 1922.

legislation ; it is a task that ought to be deliberate and harmonious, undertaken in a serene atmosphere in which creative will can ripen.

But before the conflicting tendencies can be welded into a new legal system they must show themselves in their true proportions (now, they are still confused and disturbed), otherwise nothing permanently constructive can be accomplished. The re-establishment of law and order must precede any further undertaking.

But besides re-establishing law, and before a legal and formal solution can be given to the situation, it is necessary to examine the new movements and organs which Fascism in its earliest phase has just created, as measures of defence and organization, and as anticipations of the new social order.

The work of Fascism falls into three interdependent groups. (1) The overhauling of the old State. (2) The rearrangement and definition of its own purposes and organs. (3) The elaboration and carrying out of the new order.

Since Fascism, after five months of government, has not yet succeeded in achieving even part of these complicated undertakings, much less the whole, many of its critics and all its enemies are perplexed and confused. The majority of them pass judgment on all its manifestations, taken one by one, as if they were final, while they consider Fascism as a whole as transient ; thus they are able to describe many of its separate actions as reactionary measures which must "inevitably" lead, sooner or later, to a counter-revolution which, according to their point of view,

must simply be a return to the so-called Liberalism of the past, or to the Communist Revolution and the Dictatorship of the Proletariate.

Following the task of Fascism, however, not from a party standpoint nor from the point of view of a preconceived political theory or social order, but bearing in mind the real Fascist aim, which is "Nation-building," we perceive that its actions, because they deal with conditions as Fascism found them—and transitory conditions that must be dealt with at once—are transitory actions and cannot radically alter the situation. These actions are intended to put the pieces of State machinery into working order, one by one, and only when this is done can the whole produce a lasting and substantial change.

In overhauling the old State, Fascism also guarantees the continuity of its work and its own permanence, which is not the permanence of a party, but of a new method and system. The actual methods with which it is re-organizing the State are really new—even if in some details they seem "reactionary"—and point to future developments.

Fascism did not choose the dictatorial method because it wished to put private interests above those of the country, but because the parliamentary system had become incapable of inspiring the State with political energy, of endowing it with sufficient strength to counter the attempts against it, or to bring economic and financial order to the country.

The State was based upon Parliament, that is,

on the various political parties which made their demands by means of Parliament, so that its downfall brought with it that of the old ruling classes. The whole of the political system was now threatened by its own internal weakness and by the pressure of new classes with new aims. A new force was required, a force capable of giving rise to a new order which might solve the problems crying out for solution. This new force was Fascism, which has had to assume the dictatorship, the inevitable political form taken by every forward movement out of chaos towards any permanent regime.[1]

Fascism, with its revolutionary movement, has put itself in the place of the old ruling classes, but it cannot logically stop at this point. The old ruling class was the direct product of the political parties, and Fascism, in order to fulfil its whole duty, had actually to take their place, and this it did; for, when eventually it arrived at power, it refused to collaborate with them and refused to consider itself as a party.

"Fascism," said Bruno Corra, a Fascist writer, "is no longer a party; it is a movement towards realization. It can have no prejudice against any

[1] A year before Fascism took over the government it was obvious that only a dictatorship with a national basis could save the situation. I then wrote: "The nation is placed in a more serious position than during the war. To meet it we need the measures that, during the war, forced everyone to concentrate on labour or on the defence of the realm. But we also need that stimulating ideal of energy, devotion, and discipline, that cannot be found in war against mankind but only in working for the good of the community; what we need is that the re-making of Italy shall become a social ideal." *Co-operazione Italiana*, November 4, 1921.

of the various parties if it confines itself to the absolute dogma of national welfare. In relation to the Fascist hierarchy, the parties are in the position of consultative bodies. Fascism will carry into effect whatever is possible and beneficial in their proposals.

"The equalitarian and international waves which arose with the French Revolution, having rolled over more than a century of history, have been dispersed in Italy by the mighty breakers of Fascism. After an epoch of upheaval and wild experimentalism follows an epoch of consolidation and classic construction. The former has prepared the material which the latter will bring to life in new forms. Socialism, democracy, and Liberalism, are materials for experiment, which Fascism will use to build up a new Nation."

As a matter of fact, the ideals and the interests of many parties and movements are woven into the texture of Fascism. "In truth the Fascist State naturally tends to the disappearance of almost all the parties, because it *realizes as much as can be* realized in the programme, and still more in the spirit of each. The Fascist State, although following a rigid course peculiarly its own, is, in view of its origin, most complex, Catholic, Reactionary, Democratic, Liberal, Reformist, and Trade Unionist; for it eliminates all these parties and takes their place.

"Only anarchy and that absolute theoretical Liberalism, which is, at bottom, a mild and genteel form of anarchy, are left outside its scheme of action. The Fascist State is in fact a synthesis, a little obscure still in some respects, which will

become clearer as it goes on, and will eventually be judged, by friends and foes, in terms and with feelings very different from those of to-day." [1]

A Socialist, A. Baratono, M.P., confirms this, saying "that anyone can see that the Fascists, who have scoffed at us and persecuted us, *must*, since they have drawn leaders and many others from our ranks, resign themselves to adapting much of their best activity to Socialist, and essentially Socialist, methods and ideas" (*La Giustizia*, Socialist-Reformist organ, April 12, 1923).

Fascism has Liberals and Democrats in its Government. It does not, however, consider them as representatives of the said parties, but as capable men to be made use of. A short time ago certain representatives of the Popular Party were in its Government, but when this party wanted to make conditions about its collaboration with Fascism, especially with regard to electoral reform, Fascism dismissed the Popularist ministers. "Carrying out the vital portion of the Popularist programme," as the *Resto del Carlino* of April 24, 1923, says, "it can do without Popularists in the Government. The actual participation in the Government of men of the various parties is a superfluous guarantee in the case of a movement that is, above all, integral, like Fascism."

Fascism is abolishing the State monopoly of schools and is re-establishing religious instruction, i.e. it is carrying out some of the chief points in the Popularist programme. It is pithing the

[1] Aldo Valori (a Fascist), in the *Resto del Carlino*, April 17, 1923.

Socialist Party by absorbing its substance of Labour-Socialism and Ideal-Socialism. It has absorbed the Nationalist Party as we have seen, and many of the Sardinian Party, securing for the Sardinians what they were demanding.

As a result of this tendency all the parties who have opposed Fascism, and even those who were and still are disposed to collaborate with it, are apt to split up and disperse when they come into contact with it. Fascism gets the better of them by absorbing what is vital in them and reanimating it in a form more concrete, more attainable, or more widely acceptable. And it does even more : if they have a large following among the people it partly disperses their masses and partly absorbs them ; while if the parties are composed merely of politicians, without any wide support in the country, it turns these men out of the political arena or else converts them into its own followers.

The parties can no longer take part in the Government except by submitting to Fascism unconditionally, which means, virtually, by melting into Fascism.

"Mussolini's Government is, in fact, not a coalition Government of collaborating parties ; it is not based upon a compromise of political forces, each of which could, by seceding, make the whole concern fall to pieces. It is rather an autonomous organism rooted deeply in the spirit of the country, from which comes its insuperable strength. This means the disappearance of all the parliamentary concessions of political life, and the parties whose origin and functions are inevitably con-

nected with such concessions, are beginning to see the whole of their foundation trembling under them." [1]

All that remains of the parties are small remnants and small minorities in the country, upholders of political and spiritual idealism ; to-day they are the critics and enemies of Fascism ; to-morrow many, if not all, will be its allies.

It follows that parties are losing their efficacy as a means of gaining power, and are ceasing to be points of convergence for interests aspiring to government. Fascism meanwhile seeks collaborators outside party, in the country, wherever it can find efficiency.

Fascism abolishes party politics and cannot return to the traditional parliamentary system, which has always represented private interests and factions, and is incapable of forming a State which shall be a concrete expression of the higher unity and moral fellowship of all types and classes. Mussolini has always insisted on one thing : that the State is above all classes and their varying interests. He and his following understand and conceive the State not merely as a purely police State or a purely judicial organ, but as the supreme intermediary, the highest synthesis of all classes, of the proletariate no less than the so-called bourgeoisie. They intend, moreover, to carry their conception into action, by force if not by consent. " Henceforth Fascism signifies—and will signify more clearly every day—the determination to guide the country according to its own inspiration, under the spur of supreme necessity ;

[1] Editorial in the *Resto del Carlino*, April 25, 1923.

and the more Fascism examines itself and looks towards the future, the more does it feel capable of detaching itself from that plane of political life on which the old party forces or their ghosts still disport themselves." [1]

Not being able to carry out its intentions by means of the old parliamentary system, nor to remain for long as a dictatorship, it must consider the latter as a phase "which will create a new legislation, a new constitution, a new political and economic regime, so that the law, objectively determined and imposing itself upon all, may fulfil the office it has held for centuries among civilized peoples." [2]

"The Fascist Revolution," writes Aldo Valori in the article quoted, "the significance of which has been gauged by few, is destined to develop by creating new executive organs out of 'the will of the country'; and the actual interpretation of the phrase 'the will of the country' will probably be very different to-morrow from what it was yesterday. The representative institutions that govern us are not original: every people tends, now, to have original institutions, altering, according to their own tastes, good or bad, those which have been imposed on them. The decadence of parliamentarianism constituted an example, dangerous, often humiliating, but quite logical, of this tendency. The Fascist regime ought, on the other hand, to give a fitting and lasting solution to this problem, which should elevate, rather than degrade national political life,

[1] The *Resto del Carlino*, April 15, 1923.
[2] Vilfredo Pareto, in *Gerarchia*, April 1923.

even at the cost of giving up some conventionalities of speech and thought. If I am not mistaken this is what Mussolini meant when he spoke of the decayed corpse of the 'Goddess of Liberty,' alluding not to Liberty, but to her idol, the fetish before which people pretend to bow the knee in reverence, while all the time they are picking their neighbour's pockets."

"Fascism has not yet expressed its final theory on the subject of Parliament" writes the *Popolo d'Italia*, the official organ of Fascism, on April 27, 1923. "And the real and weighty problem that will confront the Fascist Revolution, which is essentially hierarchic and anti-demagogic, will consist in setting the mass of voters in order by transforming the ill-assorted herd into efficient categories, and by giving each voter the due weight that belongs to his social 'quality.'

"The Fascist Revolution does not mean to do away with the representative system, but rather to set it on a just and reasonable basis. The evil really lies in the confused state of the electoral masses, where all human values, social, prefessional, military and technical, go for nothing, and in the confused state of the assembly which is simply an indefinable coalition, whereas it should represent Society by categories and through a functional hierarchy."

Thus wrote the mouthpiece of the Fascist Government, after a resolution of the Great Council of Fascism (a sort of deliberative committee, in which the chief exponents of the various Fascist bodies and organizations, and the Fascist ministers, are represented) to change the electoral law then existing (universal suffrage with proportional re-

presentation), explaining that the new law ought not to be considered as final.[1]

Mussolini, in answer to the critics who saw in this reform a breaking-up of the constitution, declared on May 1, 1923, "that the Fascist Government had never had any intention of attacking and

[1] I think it is of importance to quote the whole of this resolution passed on April 25, 1923:

"The Great Council of Fascism, discussing the question of reforming the system of political election, moves: the rejection of the proposal to return to a system of uninominal constituencies, because it is opposed to the most salient features of Fascism, which although valuing most highly individual and class elements and the private aspects of local life, yet also remains a movement based on the wide ranks of the nation, who have one great object held in common; the synthesis and unification of the whole strength of every class and district in Italy. The Great Council of Fascism therefore proposes, in perfect accord with a motion of the Council of Ministers of November 15, 1922, and another of the Great Council of Fascism on December 12th, to reaffirm the unquestionable need of substantially modifying the actual law based on strictly individualist qualification. The most casual inspection of the latter period of our parliamentary life, which coincides with the total decay of national life, affords ample proof that the said system in no way guarantees the fulfilment of any legislative programme whatsoever, while it constantly disturbs, and almost always for petty motives, the political course, necessarily grounded on the heterogeneous parliamentary coalition, which the cabinet is following. And since the difficult task of Fascism, which undertakes to restore economic order and moral tone in the country, must not be interrupted by new, futile, and bitter quarrels, it is proposed that the substantial modification consist of the adoption of the system of majorities with wider electoral limits, by which the entire list obtaining the largest number of votes compared with the others shall be declared elected and the rest of the posts shared proportionately among the other lists. The Great Council of Fascism maintains that this system alone, which is suited to present contingencies and political conditions, will, since it makes for parliamentary representation of all parties without prejudice, guarantee the formation of a Government of sound majority and the continuity of the policy chosen and consecrated by electoral suffrage."

destroying parliamentary institutions and the constitution." But it does not follow, of course, that they may not be altered.

We see then that the elements of the constitutional crisis are profound, far-reaching, and varied, but Fascism, by means of the dictatorship, has, for the time, defended the Central Power from the danger that threatened it. Anti-State forces no longer have free play ; the State is no longer the inert spectator of their endless conflicts, but keeps them under control and answerable to the co-ordination it imposes. This is the chief difference between the present time and the period before Fascism's entry into the Government : the essential problems to be solved remain the same, with the difference that to-day there is a State which has been formed for the express purpose of solving them.

The duration and character of the dictatorship will depend entirely on the complexity of the problems to be solved. Nor is it possible at this time to forsee the exact form a new regime will take. What are " the original representative institutions " which ought to prevail within the State? What will the structure and workings of the political institutions be? So far, no one can say ; Fascism has got rid of the past so rapidly and has so thoroughly destroyed those Utopian illusions, which at least served to uphold ideals of thought, if they did nothing else, that even the most experienced thinkers who had already, long before Fascism or the war, condemned both the existing institutions and the Utopias which were proposed as efficacious substitutes—are now perplexed : the working out of a new policy is constantly inter-

rupted, hindered, and delayed by the need for temporary measures called for by the situation. It seems, indeed, as if events must develop a little further before anything definite can be known about the future structure of the State.

It is not yet known whether a social reconstruction is to be based on the Trade Unions or Corporations, or on the communes. Very probably the new Society will proceed from the synthesis of both types of organization. On this account the *Carta di Carnaro* is almost universally recognized as an ideal, but no one knows how to bridge the gulf between the actual and the ideal State: the federation of communes and, at the same time, some means of expressing the will of the Corporations.[1]

On account of these real difficulties the Government, which cannot stop to ponder, but must have the chance of acting in peace free from parliamentary distractions, means to resort to an expedient, as it frankly admits: that of an electoral system which will secure it an overwhelming majority in Parliament, but which also allows all minorities a chance of being represented.

Thus the dictatorship has reinforced itself, but it does not hide itself away from criticism. It works in broad daylight, with a firm hand on the pulse of the country.

But by this time few imagine that the old parliamentary system can come to life again, however modified, and really few regret it. The organic incapacity of the old electoral Parliament to represent the interests of the Nation has been

[1] See Appendix I.

proved in an undeniable fashion, and no theoretical arguments can help to remedy it. No broadening of the electoral basis has been able to raise up a ruling class, aware of the needs of the whole country, but instead we have been afforded the spectacle of masses, parties, and self-seekers in continual disturbance and fanatically bent on their own interests. The restriction of the electoral basis cannot satisfy the country for long. It is the system that has got to be changed.

"The resurrection of Parliament as an institution is no longer possible. Liberals and Democrats, who in all good faith wish to identify liberty and democracy with Parliament, are off the track. The electoral Parliament is dead : committees may give us the ghost of a Parliament, but from the electors we shall not get a Parliament formed of an *élite* who are capable of understanding the real needs of the Nation or of acting in its interest. No way out of the present political situation can be found by electing a new Parliament on a basis of universal suffrage and the party system. Sooner or later, out of all these difficulties and struggles, new institutions must arise which will represent the interests and needs of the nation outside all party machinery. We must work for liberty and democracy in quite a different way.

"Italy had, in her glorious communes, a magnificent tradition of really free institutions, which continued substantially unchanged even through the lordships and absolute Governments. We renounced them in order to copy French models, basing everything on the citizen-elector, a technical abstraction and juridical fiction. The

'citizen' does not exist: the workman exists, the agricultural labourer, the farmer, the employer, the professional man: the family exists, the benefit society, the factory, the law court, the bank and the school. We must get our representatives for public administration not from an abstraction, but from these living realities.

"We must not debate upon abstract questions, but on concrete and practical problems. Theory confuses and obscures the real features of the problems, and parties live on theory, under cover of which privileged factions and clever politicians seek their own ends. Theory must be cleared away so as to bring real and concrete problems into the light of day. But those who fool about with party programmes and profess to find an entire and logically co-ordinate solution to all problems in certain theoretical suggestions, will do us no good, because no single solution exists for all the many problems of Italian life, varying in different neighbourhoods, and because no solution arrived at by logical deduction can fit the turns and complexities of the many-sided Italian race.

"Parties, with all their illusions, are the ruin of Italy: they lay too heavy a burden on her national economy which is as yet only in the making; they crush her under the weight of their theories, projects, and programmes. Protection, heavy taxes, shipping subsidies, and an ever-growing bureaucracy are the outcome of party theory masking selfish interests. Salvation must be looked for outside parties and outside Parliament, which is their instrument.

"Representation in the communes must be con-

fided once more to natural groups; out of the free grouping of the communes into associations and federations the region will once more come into existence. From the representation of regions, associations, and communes will emerge the new Parliament, after the Italian pattern, where the *élite* of the race will be gathered together by a spontaneous process. In this Parliament the producers will have the management of public affairs, which will be limited to a few matters of essential importance, and the rule of the non-producers, self-constituted by means of party will come to an end. To-day the producer is tolerated; he is useful as paying the cost of what other people do; he must become the master."[1]

In contrast to all past Governments who have aimed in theory at representing general interests, but who have never provided in practice for their expression in institutions, Fascism sets out to make the general interest more important than all private interests, organizing in such a way that the general interest is absolutely guaranteed. "Class war" was used by the parties of the past as an efficient means of strengthening themselves to gain power, and this has in no small measure contributed to the insistence on class war. When it came into power, Fascism rose above this phase of the political struggle, and is actually organizing Society to guard the general interest, which is only doing what every party should have done when in power.

[1] Giulio Pierangeli, in *La Critica Politica*, April 25, 1923. See also the chapter on "Regionalism" in my book, *Guilds and Co-operatives in Italy*.

Undoubtedly present conditions are favourable to this tendency of Fascism. In Europe, during the past few years, every kind of experiment in Government—from military to Communist dictatorship, from a return to the past to the creation of something entirely new has been tried without success. It is plainly advisable to seek to apply new methods or else a synthesis of all the old.

It grows daily more evident that nothing new, no improvement, can be created by subordinating all interests to one in particular, and that gradually this actually diminishes the productive and consuming powers of a community, since the people who have been conquered and subordinated, to whatever class they may belong, slacken their energies instinctively if not consciously, so that the sum total of energy is diminished.

The methods which have been employed so far have resulted in confusion, owing to their insistence on measures which sever classes and occupations, and tend to oppress one or another according to the point of view of the victorious political party. Not thus can the general interest be effectively guarded.

There was always an attempt made on some special interest, occupation, or even mode of thought, and the fight went on—never entirely successful—with reference to the interests which were being attacked, to the neglect and prejudice of the general interest ; even damaging the winning side, which would eventually, and often quite soon, have to give way if not succumb entirely to the conquered, who were backed up by other people

who had really nothing to do with the dispute, but had been annoyed by the general upset.

It came, therefore, to be realized that the general interest could better be effectively guarded by bringing together and organizing under a common denominator all private interests. Confusion can only be eliminated by fusion ; not by the suppression—which is no substitute—of private interests and occupations, but by their organization—can new interests and classes develop which will, in their turn, persuade other outlying interests to amalgamate with themselves in an effective union.

The political Parliament, as it is now in practice if not in theory, seems to be an instrument created for the express purpose of making antagonistic organizations in the country ; it insists on these antagonisms because it profits by them. So it is easily understood why Parliament has rather augmented than reduced the social confusion, and it is equally clear that a functional parliamentary democracy, insisting that its factors shall uphold the general interest, and making the protection of private interests impossible, would produce the contrary, the progressive fusion of interests and the creation of institutions that would promote that fushion.

Fascism seems to have sensed all this, and appears to be acting on it. The world is certainly tired of political experiments, and instinctively surrenders itself to any leadership which promises the settlement of the most acute differences, without much troubling itself about forms and labels. The " will of the country " is certainly undergoing changes. This mental attitude explains, in part, the wide support given to Fascism, even by those

who do not agree with everything it does, and in spite of the fact that its enemies are not sparing in criticisms or in open hostility.[1] The great majority of the population is but little attached to party politics, and it is ready to forget the mistakes of anyone who knows how to get rid of them, and how to give expression to their own inarticulate instincts and aspirations.

The Fascist conception, not abstract but functional, of the State, is inseparable from their conception of social and economic conditions. The Fascist idea of economics explains Fascist politics.

From the moment when they began to aim at the conquest of power, the Fascists seem to have asked themselves the chief question of every real statesman, exactly as Pareto put it: "Given the feelings and interests of the country, what is the best regime compatible with them?"

Approaching the problems in this manner, they set themselves, as we have shown, against Socialist Internationalism, which was exactly the right thing to do in a moment when the tide of history was flowing back towards the Nation, producing a concentration of interest and a revival of national feeling. They also took their stand against the Socialist notion—which by this time had become

[1] The dictatorship is not to be taken too literally; the Opposition newspapers have entire liberty to express criticisms from every point of view. And if they have to express themselves in measured terms, that does not take away from, but even adds to, the efficacy of their criticisms. It cannot be said that the dictatorship does not take public opinion into consideration; it values it, but it does not allow itself to be frightened by a revolution in print, nor does it tolerate the organizing of rebellion.

a commonplace of politics in all parties—of the division of Society into two antagonistic classes and the identification of the ruling classes with the bourgeoisie. "Bourgeois" and "proletariate," according to Socialist simplicity, are the two sole classes into which Society is divided, whereas in the theory of Marx these were the two active and characteristic classes in those countries where there was great industrial development.

The mistake was in not having considered the different conditions of the various countries, adopting hypotheses to explain Italian life, which were entirely at variance with reality. The whole of Society and politics is disposed of in the two formulas: "Proletariate and bourgeois," and "the bourgeois State." [1]

The reality was much more complicated. Italy is almost entirely an agricultural country, and the Socialists had quite forgotten that their own Marx was not at all certain as to how agriculture would develop technically, and what social consequences such developments might have. Moreover, until recently the Italian bourgeoisie has never had the intelligence to form a class with definite interests and ideals. The "bourgeois State" did not exist in Italy; the bourgeoisie is not there identified with the State, and has not actually directed its politics. "The State in Italy was, and is, a modified oligarchy, essentially political and bureaucratic" wrote a writer who was independent of

[1] Thus the Socialists maintain that the bourgeoisie invented Fascism and financed it so as to establish its own dictatorship. Too simple an explanation, which explained nothing, and has had tragic consequences for Socialism.

any party, before the Fascists came into power, division of society into two antagonistic classes "and Parliament never coincided with the thought and feeling of the Nation."[1]

Attempts were made to bring country and Parliament into closer touch, first by universal suffrage, and then by proportional representation, but these attempts were unsuccessful, making the situation worse instead of better. And so another change had to be made in the electoral system, for which Fascism assumes all responsibility.

Nothing was able to break up the bureaucratic and political oligarchy which, under the cloak of democracy and Liberalism, exercised a very real dictatorship by means of its supporters, plutocratic, or proletarian. It tolerated and often backed up the bestowal of privileges and monopolies of different sorts—State, Trade Union, and plutocratic—and never found any definite solution for problems involving general interests. The real majority of the country, made up of the producing and professional classes in every walk of life, together with their interests, were left outside State and Parliament, so that State and Parliament were completely estranged from the country.

Fascism set itself resolutely against the whole situation. In its statesmanship and its work of reorganization it does not consider the bourgeoisie or the proletariate and their special interests, but recognizes producers and production, and throws open the State, not to classes, but to functions, assigning social duties to Capital and Labour,

[1] G. Pierangeli, in *La Critica Politica*, August 25, 1922.

and in consequence imposing limits on them. And all this is not based on abstract discussions about an ideal State or on schemes for the future, but on action. In Fascism academic discussions are very rapidly transformed into action.

Thus it has happened that Fascism has attracted, not so much the higher ranks of the bourgeois and agriculturists, who are the big land-owners and often absentees, as the country folk—*mezzadri* (peasants who share in the produce), tenants, small farmers, and even day-labourers—and the professional men and artisans, the endless variety of people living in the rural districts and centres who, up till now, have not received their due either politically or professionally.[1]

Fascism is a protection and guide to the middle classes who are up against the monopolies of politicians, bureaucrats, plutocrats, and even prole-

[1] "Recently the tendency has been to put a stigma on Fascism, accusing it of upholding the interests of the great agricultural class. This is untrue. Fascism is in every way the political and spiritual expression of a new, small, rural democracy which has been formed in recent years. Its historic feat—of quite exceptional importance—is to have succeeded in making the vast masses of our rural population a living and integral part of our history" (Mussolini, in the article "Fascism and the Rural Population " in *Gerarchia*," May 1922.

Some big land-owners have supported Fascism and then betrayed it. "There is no love lost," writes Mussolini in the same article, "between Fascism and the land-owners. The renewal of certain contracts between peasants and proprietors has rendered the difference more marked, so much so that some proprietors appear to be complaining of hard times. They are not able in the long run, to sympathize with Fascism, which pays no respect to their selfishness, but obliges them to bow to the interests of production and the Nation." A year has passed since this was written and Mussolini's prophecies have all come true; to-day the land-owners do not wish to submit to Fascist discipline, which demands sacrifices on their part.

tarians, against each and all, in fine, who have made use of politics for their own ends. Not a little of Italy's economic development is to be attributed to these classes ; and yet all these people, who live entirely on their own labour and diligence, have until now been unrecognized economically and politically ; they used to vacillate between the different parties according to the politics of the moment, without taking on any salient features of their own. Now they are beginning to organize themselves in Trade Unions and also politically—and to turn towards Fascism —earning themselves a new social status in relation to the other classes which had preceded them in the modern wave of organization.

This fact has created an entirely new situation. The social struggle which had not been able to come to any definite conclusion, since it was based on a fallacious and restricted foundation—on the proletariate and bourgeoisie, and the bourgeois State—and neglected many important factors in the country, is taking on a new aspect, with entirely unforseen developments.

Between the proletariate and the so-called bourgeoisie quite a new type is flourishing in Italian Society, from which, according to many, the new Italian ruling classes will proceed, not simply in the political sense, that is, by forming the strength of Parliament or the Government, but in the sense that " it is giving rise to a class of picked men, who are in direct daily contact with the masses from which they are drawn, and whose needs and aspirations they know ; they are neither proletariate nor bourgeois, but rather a mixture

of both, being entirely composed of workers, chosen for their technical capabilities, intelligence, and thrift.

"The *petite bourgeoisie* in public or private employment, and above all the country people, who do and always will, form the best framework for our national economic organization, the small farmer and the *mezzadro* (likely to develop into a small proprietor), the new democracy from which efficient aristocracies are drawn, this is the new democracy that has been more than half created by Fascism. It is clear that to Fascism the conquest of power is only the beginning of a new phase of its development, of which succeeding phases must show the value. It was to facilitate the formation of those ruling *élites* that Fascism desired power. A Government would be nothing without a State behind it.

What does this new ruling class want, and what is their aim? This gives rise to some most interesting speculations. No political party knows better than Fascism that class of Society which used to be known as the *petite bourgeoisie* or the rural democracy, incorrect expressions, since every day their ranks are swelled by elements proceeding from the genuine proletariate. This new class is not an actual discovery of Fascism, but it is Fascism alone that has given it political consciousness and made of it a ruling class. We know how the other parties have behaved towards it. The Socialists, with their mania for proselytizing, even organized the small land-owners and share-owning *contadini*, but their programme of socialization and industrialization of the soil was

against the interest of the people they had organized ; and the contrast between theory and practice became still more striking in those periods and districts where there was unemployment among the braccianti,[1] who were then forced into compulsory land-work, whether the farmers and *mezzadri* liked it or not. At one time the Popular Party believed in the possibility of regulating the whole of Italian agriculture by a system of small-holdings, without taking into consideration the extreme variety of the agricultural possibilities of our land, and the consequent variety in methods of cultivation ; and without considering that the process of gradual progression from the share-system to actual proprietorship is a question of gradual technical development. This new governing class has popular support, but no one is taking the trouble to give it any political education.'"[2]

These middle classes, all assiduous producers, form the durable strength of Italy. They are well described by one who knows them :

"It is really the productive middle and agricultural classes who, together with the workers in indigenous industries, and artisans, are giving to the world the shining example of a new form of civilization. The revolutionary crisis, which began with the war and still continues, going through phases which may yet have unforseen issues and developments, will bring us to a new social and political order, which will be characterized by this *superiority of producers*. In Italy, agriculture can and will work miracles ; agricultural production

[1] Navvies who undertake any rough work, often in gangs (E. T.)
[2] Francesco Meriano, in the *Popolo d'Italia*.

can still be doubled, in spite of the progress undeniably made during the last twenty years; the travelling *cattedre* of agriculture,[1] the Co-operatives, the more educated and intelligent of the land-owners, and the tenants, are quietly working real miracles and finding valuable support in the farmer's natural intelligence and fondness for the land. The spread of co-operative land-holding, the multiplication of small land-owners, and the extension of horticulture are powerful aids to this agricultural development. As agriculture, which ought to produce sufficient grain for our needs, thrives, the minor industries in small centres will once more prosper and develop: and the wealth produced in the country will flow into the city as the farmer feels the need of better built homes, more elaborate furniture, and better clothes."[2]

The awakening of these middle classes, which in an agricultural country like Italy are chiefly drawn from the rural population, entirely alters the political and social struggle, transforming the actual contrast between bourgeoisie and proletariate, until now thought to be the decisive moulding force of Society, into merely one of many dynamic forces. Living as they do in small or smallish communities, they greatly feel the need of self-government, and look on the State, consciously or unconsciously, as a federation of autonomies. All, as we have said, are against monopoly, bureaucracy, plutocracy, and even protection, but they are not necessarily anti-proletariate. Many

[1] A system of teaching by travelling instructors who hold classes and deal with local questions (E. T.)
[2] G. Pierangeli, in *La Critica Politica*, January 25, 1923.

of them were inclined to make common cause with the proletariate, but the anti-national tendency of the latter, and their fixed ideas on the economic solution have driven them away.

Recognizing these classes and their functions, Fascism cannot allow other classes and occupations to hold a superior place in public economy and in the State, that is, it explicitly recognizes that a co-ordinate economic life cannot be expected to result from the creation of a rigidly uniform economic and juridical system, or from super-taxes in the form of expropriations, but only from a process of integration: classes and functions must be co-ordinated in a flexible economic system, in which the State does not take over the functions of the productive groups, but leaves them free to compete with each other. In consequence, the State will have to give up many of its functions so as to prevent itself from being put in the position, and often involved in the necessity, of favouring privilege and parasitism.

Fascism is then up against the "State-for-everything" and absolutely against the tendency, generally established hitherto, of demanding and expecting the State to undertake all services and receive none. But when Fascism sets out to free the State of many of its tasks, it does not intend to return to the classic school of Liberalism any more than to approach Collectivism. It is against Liberalism just as it is against State Socialism; that is, it denies that the State ought to own and administer all sources of production, and therefore declines all action in that direction, but it also disapproves of *laissez-faire* and a neutral

State ; it subordinates all activity, and not merely economic activity, to the superior needs of national Society and of the State. This subordination goes hand in hand with control.

Control is the essence of Fascist State action ; it does not hold aloof entirely from productive activity, although from its criticism of excessive control and bureaucratic management it would seem to be *Liberal* in the extreme. In its hands control is transformed from an expedient to meet the needs of the moment, as it was during the war, into a policy conducive to a synthesis of State and Society.

It wishes by means of control to protect, and at the same time harmonize the private and clashing interests of types and classes. These proposals have already been formulated by other Governments or other schools of thought, but Fascism intends to carry them out at once, as a method of conducting the country's economic life in the general interest.

Thus Fascism has much of the quality of Socialism, having the same tendency to make the State the centre of every activity, but it is anti-Socialist inasmuch as it rejects the forms of traditional Socialism. In its conception the State intervenes, but does not possess ; it is not the employer ; does not reduce everything to bureaucracy ; leaves the ground open for the free development of initiative and energy, and recognizes the necessity for different kinds of enterprise.

To the State belongs the duty of co-ordinating and encouraging the process of Nation-building. Fascism looks on the State "as an agency to bring about civilization" (A.E.).

Fascism is opposed to the system of monopoly, not merely because it is against socialization and intends to give back to private enterprise various branches of industry which have already been socialized (including the Guild), but also because it is opposed to the monopoly of Trade Unions, and of employers' associations, recognizing at the same time, however, private enterprise side by side with that of the Guilds, private capital side by side with collective, and desiring to balance and co-ordinate them in the general interest, thus showing a tendency towards the regulative Guild system.

Monopolies held by single groups are dangerous centrifugal forces, and Fascism will not allow them to assume authoritative rights. Its policy of decontrol is therefore very different from that adopted by the Governments in the post-war period, which gave up their war functions in the interest of groups of private persons, thus severely weakening the State. Fascism, certainly, has given up the directive powers of the State over economic activity, but only to make the State more efficient in its function of real and genuine control in the general interest.

Until now many people have thought that the State would strengthen itself by taking over functions of all kinds, but as a matter of fact, it has only grown weaker by doing so; it will grow stronger by freeing itself of the duties which can be better fulfilled by others, while at the same time it extends and perfects its controlling power.

We must include in this general summary of Fascist policy one of Mussolini's recent speeches, which has been wrongly taken to mean that Italy is on the way to becoming a plutocratic paradise:

"I think that the State ought to resign its economic functions, especially those of a monopolistic character, for it can never adequately administer them. I hold that a Government which desires speedily to relieve the population from the post-war crisis ought to allow private enterprise free play, and give up all interfering and hampering legislation, which may appease the demagogues of the left, but, as experience is proving, eventually becomes absolutely fatal to general interests and economic development. . . .

"It is therefore high time to remove the last remnants of what used to be called war impedimenta from the shoulders of the productive forces of each Nation; and it is time to examine economic problems no longer with a mind disturbed by the passions of war. I do not believe that the complexity of forces, which, in industry, agriculture, commerce, banks, and transport, may be called by the collective term of Capitalism, is about to pass away as some extreme Socialists have been declaring. One of the greatest of historical events, which has been unfolded before our eyes, is showing that any system of economy which is opposed to free initiative and individual enterprise, will fail more or less miserably before much time has elapsed. But free initiative does not exclude the agreement between organizations, and the more loyally separate interests are defended, the more easy does such agreement become."[1]

It is a grave mistake to interpret these declarations, which are a recognition of vital truths,

[1] Speech to the delegates at the International Congress of Chambers of Commerce, Rome, March 19, 1923.

as the confession of an anti-proletariate and purely capitalist policy. Recent events, especially those in Russia, cannot be ignored ; they are a warning. To delude the proletariate into thinking that it can in the present circumstances suddenly develop and create a system of pure Collectivism and to affirm that the social ideal is to bureaucratize everything, is to practise a cruel deception.

Fascism recognized, while it represented a small minority, that there was still a necessity for private property, but it has always insisted on the social duties of Capital and has never discouraged the Guild form of production, distribution, and administration, while it has set its face against all kinds of profiteering (see Appendix).

Fascism does not go in for improvisations because it has learnt that these never lead to lasting results. When it recognizes that many functions, being closely dependent on certain forms of Capital, cannot be improvised, it comes very near to the truth ; but when it aims at binding various forms of Capital together in view of some higher function—to facilitate the general interest, for example—it is on the way to a higher equilibrium. In all this there is a latent tendency towards the Guilds which must eventually find expression in positive form ; Regulative Guilds, perhaps?

Thus Fascism assimilates all that was living and vital in the past, and rejects all that experience has shown to be merely a dead weight. Its economic policy harmonizes with its political policy and becomes one with it, the main characteristic of both being the attempt to make every interest yield to public welfare.

CHAPTER VIII

NEW INSTITUTIONS

GOVERNMENTS come and go so that no Government can guarantee that a certain policy shall be permanently carried on. Every Government has professed that it stood for general and national interests, but each in turn has in practice supported some prevalent special interest. National unity and solidarity has been enforced at times of national calamity, but no social order has been built up fitted to keep alive, by the very process of its daily routine, a sense of "National Being."

Fascism is concentrating its whole endeavour on the attempt to build up just such a social order. Its political power, its Trade Union and Co-operative Movement, its "groups of competency," its militia, and many other types of organization are all means to this end.

(A) FASCIST TRADE UNIONISM.

The Fascist Trade Union Movement is a Guild Movement. It draws inspiration from the Italian Mediæval Guilds and the Guild Republics and from the *Carta di Carnaro,* and its aim is to adapt their forms and principles to the facts of to-day.[1]

[1] *Vide* Appendix I and III. App. I: "The Constitution of the State of Fiume," drawn up by d'Annunzio and his advisers, represents the ideal State towards which his followers, as well as many others belonging both to the Fascist and to other groups,

This Guild Movement has various aspects that differentiate it from any other Trade Union or Guild Movement. Its programme does not include "the abolition of private property" by means of "the class war," nor the "Socialization of the means of Production," i.e., the creation of a new Society in which all property is vested in the State. It recognizes, on the contrary, the real flexibility of economic "laws" (so-called). It does not object to private property, provided that it is accompanied by a consciousness of social responsibility and is neither "parasitic" nor "profiteering" and its aim is, by means of the free competition of ability ("lotta di capacita") to select and foster those forms of production and organization which will best serve the public.[1] But alongside private property of individuals and of capitalist firms, it explicitly recognizes those Guild forms of proprietorship which are being formed in the Co-operatives of production, run by Labour, and the Consumers' Co-operatives, and it does not fail to recognize that these latter ought to be substituted

are tending. App. III. "The Statutes of the Fascist Corporations" ("corporation" is the Italian term for Guilds) is an indispensable document for the understanding of present efforts towards the reconstruction of Italy.

[1] "It is true that Fascism has destroyed the indictment against property that was brought by Communism; but an indictment may be brought once more at the instance of the injured nation more just and enlightened than that of Communism. I mean that property unworthily used cannot any longer be tolerated.

"We would put in the dock irresponsible holders of property: they are the real delinquents."—Edmondo Rossoni, the general secretary of the Fascist Corporations, in *Il Lavoro d'Italia*, February 22, 1923, recognizing thus frankly the social function of capital. Fascism gives itself a moral basis for controlling it.

for other forms of capitalist action wherever they can show better results.[1]

In this system the problems of "the abolition of the wage system" and "the emancipation of the proletariate" are by no means left out of sight, but, like that of the "preservation, or not, of Capitalism," are looked on as questions of proved capacity, that is to say, as questions to be decided according to the test of capacity afforded by the development of the organizations in question, and not as a political problem, to be solved a priori from axiomatic theories. The intention is to set up a competition free from all privilege or legal monopoly which "will take the form of a 'lotta di capacita' between the various groups of producers."[2] This intention was undoubtedly suggested by the experience of war economy and by the more recent experiments of the Russian Revolution.[3]

The negative of the "class war for the conquest of power," by means of which, according to traditional Socialism, the proletariate were to bring about the new social order, occupied an important position in Fascist theory, which is, for this reason, condemned to certain failure by the Socialists and Syndicalists of the old school. They pronounce

[1] "Fascist Trade Unionism," says Mussolini, does not fail to see that, at a future day, the Trade Union Producers' Societies may be the unit of a new type of economy," but he denies that the proletariate is to-day in a position to create such a type.

[2] F. Lollini: "Sindacalismo Nazionale e Ricostruzione Economica," in *La Vita Italiana*, November 15, 1922.

[3] The substitution of a struggle (or competition) between different kinds of organized ability for the struggle between classes (class war) was already foreseen by writers during the war. Cf. also *Guilds and Co-operatives in Italy*, by Odon Por, p. 5.

this judgment because they fail to see that Fascism has actually accomplished a revolution and that the time for construction has arrived. This is the contention of Fascism, which maintains that the class war, if not abolished, must be at least suspended, because we have already reached the stage of national reconstruction on the basis of a sound social order—the stage which the Social Communists hope to reach by means of their "conquest of power"—"Conquistare lo Stato per Rifare l'Italia" was the programme of the early Socialists, but, as we have seen, its realization was prevented by the extremists; a programme substantially identical with that of the Fascisti; the difference between them arises from the difference in the positions they occupy. It is one of tactics, not of substance.

In order to understand the acts and the intentions of the Fascisti, we must realize the view they take as to the present phase of our history and as to their own strategic position. They firmly believe that we are in a revolutionary period and that it is therefore possible to create and reconstruct. This was their purpose, and not merely to put one set of men into the Government in place of another. According to them, the new phase of history was to develop, not in accordance with some pre-arranged Utopia, but as a new and sound basis for further social development.

We have said more than once that Fascism, especially since it has come into power, is not, and does not consider itself, a party. "The elements of which Fascism is composed do not belong to a single class, they are fused together

in the crucible of patriotism. Fascism to-day is the State and all that is in it; the economic organizations and all the various forces that support Fascism are supporters not of a party but of the State."[1]

All the organs of Fascism, political and economic, consider themselves as organs of the State, acting in the service of national reconstruction. "Fascism is the State—political, military, industrial. The Corporations are the economic, productive side of Fascism" (Rossoni). "The Corporations will be State organs acting in the sphere of economics" (Racheli). And by a resolution passed March 15, 1923, the Great Fascist Council "recognizes in the Corporations one of the aspects of the Fascist Revolution."

The relations of Fascist Trade Unionism with the State are, of course, quite different from those of other types of Trade Unionism. These, with their "class war," were definitely anti-State, for they identified it with the ruling class and considered it as the instrument of class oppression.[2]

[1] Mario Racheli, the leader of the Corporation of Agriculture, in *Lavoro d'Italia* (the official organ of the Confederation of Corporations, February 22, 1923).

[2] The truth is that the class war of the Socialist Trade Unions was, to a great extent, a mere theoretical dogma; in practice they were ready to collaborate with the State, just as with the employers, but nevertheless it was considered politic to insist on a revolutionary phraseology, thus creating a fatal misunderstanding. "The avowed theoretic principles of the Fascist Trade Unions are nothing but a bold statement of a method which the Socialists have in reality always pursued, although they found it convenient to mask it by revolutionary phrases. Fascist Trade Unionism has simply taken as its principle of organization that which was the logical outcome of Reformism."—O. Zuccarini, in *Critica Politica*, December 25, 1922.

National Trade Unionism, on the other hand, considers the State as above class, and desires that it should really retain that position.

The old Trade Unionism held aloof from the State, while the new considers itself part of it, an organ of the economic recovery of the country, a permanent organ of production. As such it claims the function of directing the whole economic life of the country.

It follows from the relationship of national Trade Unionism with the State and from the function it has undertaken that it must deal with production, and not merely with the interests of certain classes—with all the elements of production, not one only, and that it must be on a footing of frank collaboration with the other elements and, as far as possible, avoid friction.

If national Trade Unionism were to organize Labour only, or Employers only, it would land the Nation in civil war; but this is precisely what it wants to avoid with its methods of organization, which are specially directed to the restoration of peace as an indispensable condition of the moral and economic restoration of the country and its future progress.

National Trade Unionism, then, is not waging the class war, nor is it merely regulating relations between Capital and Labour; it is collaborating with the State in the re-ordering of the Nation, organizing every citizen in his character of producer. It is not a class organization, "no longer dealing merely with wage-earners, but general, social, interprofessional, or integral." [1]

[1] S. Panunzio, in *Lavoro d'Italia*, May 12, 1923.

It must not be supposed that Fascism thinks it possible to abolish the class war at a stroke; the wish to get rid of it is a suggestion, and one that is fully justified by many indications both economic and political; but Fascism itself admits that the class war will inevitably return if there is serious resistance to the new order, which is intended to do away with the conditions that produce it.

This collaboration is not meant by Fascism to be a method of protecting vested interests; the intention is that all should become efficient producers, and it will not tolerate the self-seeking who want only to keep what they have got, who merely make a pretence of assisting production. In the case of capitalists who are doing important work there will be no interference, but only in any case where the interests of the Nation are neglected. In opposition to the capital of the capitalists will stand the capital of the producers, organized workers and technicians.

"The relations between Capital and Labour may vary according to the function of Capital, or rather, according to the method in which that function is fulfilled. Capital must not think only of making profit, but should recognize its responsibility for running big enterprises for the country, that will add to its strength and prestige. If Capital fails to recognize this responsibility and does not fulfil this important function, we believe that the pressure of Trade Unionism will be indispensable either as a spur to action or to get rid of capitalists altogether and leave the field free to a kind of Capital which does recognize a national responsi-

bility and an appointed mission" (Rossoni). "And as for Labour, Fascism does not consider it simply as merchandise, but as a living, creative, intelligent force, placed at the service of the country" (Rossoni).

These principles are reflected in the new economic order that is being elaborated. Every kind of activity, manual and intellectual, is being organized; all producers—working capitalists, technical and professional employees, merchants, artisans, artists, peasant proprietors, industrial and agricultural labourers, etc., are being organized in Trade Unions, local, provincial and national, according to their trade, industry, or profession. These Trade Unions have a large measure of autonomy and may decide questions among themselves in the usual methods, such as strikes and lock-outs, although it is understood as a rule that a pacific solution is to be preferred and extreme measures reserved for extreme cases.

Trade Unions of different crafts in the same branch of industry or profession unite in a National Corporation.

The National Corporation represents all the interests of a given branch in relation to other Corporations and to general interests, and must see to it that the special interests of the branch do not conflict with those of the national industry or of the Nation.

The various National Corporations are affiliated together in the Confederation of National Corporations.

It will be seen that Fascism does not intend (as is usually believed abroad) to create mixed bodies

of employers and workers, which would be an economic absurdity, but to form perfectly distinct Unions of homogeneous categories and to co-ordinate them in Corporations. The form of organization selected does not neglect the work of watching over the interests of its members, whether employers, technicians, or operatives, nor does it mix operatives, capitalists, and the managerial staff in a single Union, but it binds them in a Corporation, in order that they may collaborate in the interest of the commune and the Nation.

A Corporation, according to the Fascist definition, "is the union of the various elements of production of a given branch, to which the work of each is directed, though each belongs to a distinct category or craft." We may quote also a wider definition:

"All homogeneous trades are grouped in a Trade Union; all Trade Unions of similar kinds form one Corporation; the Union of the Corporations in a superior organism suitable for ensuring a common direction and harmonious progress gives birth to the Confederation of National Corporations.

"It is in truth the Nation herself who, having attained territorial unity after fierce conflicts, now strives after and achieves another unity—a unity of production by a comprehensive organization of all her agents and instruments of production." [1]

The Corporation is, then, the synthesis of every productive activity; it is a body always ready to study industrial problems and to bring the various trades into touch and into cordial collaboration. It is within the Corporation that the conditions of

[1] Giuseppe Battaglia, in *Lavoro d'Italia*, 1923.

collaboration must be worked out ; the Corporation should issue decisions so that there may be uniformity of action among the Trade Unions.

Although they consider collaboration a national necessity, the Fascisti do not preach it ; they know that the class war can be suspended or ended only by the recognition of some great social duty of which everyone sees the importance, or during some social crisis (such as war) when united action for a common future is a question of life or death ; they consider present conditions sufficiently critical to make the need for collaboration and united action universally felt, but they are aware that "collaboration would be useless and without meaning unless organs for collaboration had been created and were alive and at work—such organs are the Corporations, affording the natural means of uniting and controlling the various trades." Collaboration could not be realized effectively except by a scheme of separate bodies formed on a basis of common function and technique and affiliated in a common organization superior to the interests of individuals, trades, and classes, making them all subservient to the supreme interests of the Nation, above all when the Nation is ruled by an iron will, by a force which seems to recall the great periods of our history" (Rossoni).

All that is essential concerning collaboration and the Corporations is summed up by Mario Racheli in *Lavoro d'Italia*, April 17, 1923:—

"The sole collaboration possible is one which takes heed of the various rights and responsibilities which arise out of conflicting interests ; but this presupposes parties and Trade Unions very different

from those which have wrought havoc in the past.

"The organs for such a collaboration can be no other than the Corporations, which do not profess either to ignore or to suppress the natural, inevitable, and fruitful conflict of economic interests, and which therefore organize the trades in Trade Unions according to characteristics by which they differ from one another; but at the same time aim at co-ordinating their action in the interest of the Nation and its place in the world. The Corporation represents in the economic world that principle of social justice which should control all classes and which is the sole foundation for social peace. The Corporation is the result and climax of the whole Trade Union Movement, reoriented by experience and freed from outgrown shibboleths. The Corporation is one aspect of the Fascist Revolution. To think of Fascism simply as a party is a fundamental error. Fascism is the new National State. It can be represented by the ancient symbol of justice.

"But it is clear that this spirit of justice must reside in something superior to party and must have at the same time a special persuasive and, if need be, coercive force. Collaboration, even if Labour is in agreement with all the other factors of production, cannot really in itself achieve anything unless these various factors submit, either voluntarily or by force, to some superior law which is the accepted authority of the economic world."

The Corporations, then, aim at reorganizing the Nation under new sanctions and on a basis of

individual and group responsibility; at organizing and regulating its economic life: they are Regulative Guilds; "they form the scaffolding of the new national solidarity" (Rossoni), as conscious organs of Government.

National Trade Unionism has found in "the Nation not only an inspiriting ideal, but also an umpire to adjudicate and decide questions arising out of class conflicts; thus restoring the idea of the Nation as an active centre of organization." [1]

National Trade Unionism is founded on the spirit of service; it asks nothing from the State but to serve it; it promises no Utopia to its members, but demands from them the spirit of sacrifice.

It declines to recognize the rule "homo homini lupus" and trusts to the spiritual needs of man, his moral sense, his religious nature, his ideality, and his reverence for the State—in a word, to the life of the Spirit. From this new attitude of mind arises a new and potent driving force, very different in direction from those that have hitherto been brought to bear on Trade Unionism.

The pivot of Fascist Trade Unionism is the State. The Statutes of the Corporations (Appendix III) are provisional and do not define everything; they do not define "national interests," "the superior law," they do not clearly state, nor regulate the rules of submission to this law. For the present, it is the directors of the Corporations who formulate the law and watch over its application.

A short experience has shown already that the system, thus administered, does not work. The authority of the directors is considered arbitrary,

[1] Francesco Meriano, in *Resto del Carlino*, April 29, 1923.

and several "categories" of producers do not recognize it. Regular and reasonable relations between the Corporations and the State are essential, "because it is only through the authoritative support of the Government that they can set up the new social and economic system indicated by the Fascist Revolution."[1]

It will be well here to interpose a short sketch of the experience till now of the Fascist Trade Union Movement. After a little more than a year and a half of official life it has about 1,300,000 affiliated members; of these, 800,000 belong to the Corporation of Agriculture; in these 800,000 members are represented all categories of agriculturists, peasants, farm labourers, small-holders, tenants, land-owners and about 50,000 experts.

Many of these have been absorbed from the old Trade Union organizations, some are new recruits, drawn especially from the middle class. The "Italian Confederation of Tradesmen (Commercianti) and Small Manufacturers (Industriali)" has recently joined the Confederation of Corporations, but no other Association of employers intends to join at present.

The movement is growing at such a pace that the old organizations of employers and of workers (bearing in mind, no doubt, the earlier Fascist method of acquiring organizations by force) were afraid that their position would become impossible, and that they would be absorbed against their will, and protested in the name of "Liberty of Association." In order to tranquilize them, the

[1] Renzo Sacchetti, in *Lavoro d'Italia*, May 5, 1923.

Great Fascist Council has declared repeatedly that it is opposed to all Trade Union monopoly, and that "Fascist Trade Unionism must be a trade unionism of 'qualitative minority,' and not of number and unanimity" (April 30, 1923).

This declaration seems, at first sight, to stultify the whole system of the Corporations, for one cannot see how the Corporations can exercise a regulative function unless they have a monopoly in the industry for which they are responsible.

When, however, one compares this decision, which has reference only to a Trade Union monopoly, and not to a Corporation monopoly, with the importance attributed by the Fascisti to regulating the relation between the Corporations and the State, we see that it points, not to the paralysis of the system of Corporations, but to their legal recognition, and it is this which assures their authority, notwithstanding the conflicts between various Trade Unions. For instance, Fascist Trade Unionism can go on organizing its associations of Employers and of Labour. But the latter will be unofficial bodies, comparable to political parties, which prepare legislative measures with a view to their being passed in Parliament; while regulative action would be undertaken—and on a national scale—only by the Chartered Corporations, on which all other organizations, whether of workers, employers, or the professions, should be proportionately represented.

But if these Chartered Corporations are to enjoy full authority and prestige, it is necessary not merely that their status and function should be fully recognized, but also that the State and the

organizations of consumers should take part in them. Otherwise, within the Corporation, employers, technicians and operatives might combine to oppose the State.[1]

Chartered Corporations thus organized will give expression to corporate law. They will direct the legislation for which the State is responsible. From their position of superiority to all disputing parties they will be able to make decisions that no one will dare to resist on pain of national outlawry.

The various Chartered Corporations will unite to form the new basis for the State.

The problem of systematizing the Corporations within the State is of the utmost urgency, otherwise conditions will revert to what they were when Trade Unions and Employers' Associations were a menace to the State. To-day this menace is held in check by the discipline imposed by Fascism. It is the old problem which other movements have studied and discussed but never solved; the same which vocational Councils were intended to solve, but of which Chartered Corporations are, in my opinion, a better solution. It is certain, however, that some solution must be found, for the problem has ripened under Fascism by the creation of the Corporations, by means of which great masses of workers have been brought within the orbit of the State, forming a reserve of power from

[1] "Collaboration between Capital and Labour," when it has been attempted, has always excluded the State and the consumers, and has always, therefore, been out for "skinning the public." Often an understanding between employers' and workers' organizations has resulted in bringing pressure to bear upon Governments for the introduction of high protective tariffs.

which it is drawing, and will continue to draw increasingly, for its staff of managers and technicians.

"The problem is to find a juridical form for an already accomplished fact: the subordination of the Trade Union Movement to national ends. The Trade Union, from being an instrument of warfare against the State, must become an organ of the State, it must be no longer a casual microbe in the social body, but an integral element in the national organism.

"The thing is to find how this can be done.

"For subordination and integration do not mean suppression and arrest, but development, amplification of the function of the Trade Union.

"What is required, then, is to rise from fact to law.

"The actual situation of Fascist Trade Unionism is precarious, though we may not wish to admit it.

"It is not, as our adversaries think, or pretend to think, that Fascist Trade Unions, barred from social co-operation, see every door closed against them, and are obliged, therefore, to submit to the demands of the State and the employers. The short but significant history of the Corporations, especially after the revolution, goes to show how the test of social co-operation works both ways and is imposed upon both sides alike.

"On the other hand, after having made an end of the demagogic illusion, the revolutionary miracle, Fascist Trade Unionism is not bent on creating a legal illusion, a miracle of law and order. As a matter of fact, the position of categories as of individuals depends rather on their strength—

in the fullest sense of the word—their capability, than on the perfection of the rules regulating their relations.

"But the present situation cannot be indefinitely prolonged.

"For systematization by law is necessary, indispensable; there cannot be substance without form; it is impossible to conceive of social institutions which are not subjected, sooner or later, to regulation by the State.

"No one can doubt that the moment for this has come, as everyone must admit that in such matters improvisation is inadmissible.

"A beginning must be made.

"The vast crucible, where the ingredients of Italy's new social life are bubbling in a state of flux, awaits the artificer who will mould future history. Sketches we have already; we are waiting for a finished design.

"The Trade Union, then, the Corporation, solemnly accepted by the revolution, must form part of the framework of State. The Corporation, suppressing the methods of class war formerly in use, must be able to substitute methods that suit the exigencies of a Fascist State, and which also are sanctioned, for without sanction no action is possible.

"It is precisely this legal sanction that is required." [1]

A special committee has been appointed by the Grand Council of the Fascisti for the study of this great problem, which involves wide interests and a radical transformation in the structure

[1] Editorial in *Il Lavoro d'Italia*, May 19, 1923.

of the State. Professor Sergio Panunzio, a distinguished jurist, who is one of its members, proposes :

" 1. The institution of the compulsory Trade Union;

" 2. Legal recognition of Trade Unions."

In support of these proposals, he says : "The public conscience is now mature enough to render it impossible for Italy to retain permanently an attitude of anarchy and illegality towards the Trade Unions.

"It is not enough that they should receive legal recognition, that recognition should become compulsory not facultative; what is needed is that every citizen should be required by law to belong to a Trade Union with a constitution defining clearly its rights and duties in relation to other Trade Unions, guaranteed by the supreme authority of the State, through its judiciary power. As the citizen has obtained his subjective right in the State, so he ought to obtain his subjective right in the Trade Union and towards the Trade Union.

"The Trade Union, besides being compulsory, ought to be a full legal entity, with public and private rights; it ought not merely to be recognized by the State, it ought to be an organic part of the State, a Trade Union, so to speak, of the State."

The compulsory Trade Union would be the preliminary and the basis of the Chartered Corporations or Chartered Regulative Guilds, unless the proposer had in mind the *Carta di Carnaro*, that is to say, the provision of a politico-Trade

Union basis rather than a purely economic provision.[1]

There is another important side of this problem: the position of the very numerous productive and distributive Guilds existing in Italy. Fascism, after having fought against, often destroyed, but, in most cases, actually conquered these Guilds, which were, most of them, Socialist, now, in its second phase, affords them full recognition, incorporating their methods, which are characteristically Italian, in its own scheme of social construction.[2]

The work of reorganizing and developing the ancient Guilds is now actually under way and new Guild initiative is at work, as in the great works of reconstruction in France. The Guild Movement in Tuscany, which is affiliated to the Fascist Central Co-operative body, "is at the head

[1] In the Italian Guild Republics of the Middle Ages every citizen was obliged to be a member of some Guild. The best known and classic example is that Dante was a member of the Guild of Apothecaries.

[2] "Co-operation, when it is not disturbed and turned aside from its economic mission by political and speculative influences, and when fitly organized for action, is invaluable for the control of markets and in the field of labour, as a school of responsibility for the rank and file of the workers. Co-operation cannot be considered as in any way opposed to Liberal principles, or as interfering with the play of commercial and industrial activities, but as a practical means for combating all forms of monopoly injurious to the consumer, and for applying the fundamental principle of free competition. For this reason, I cannot but affirm my sympathy for those forms of co-operation which, conscious of this high social mission and rising above the heat of class politics and religious faith, act as an army of defence for the public against unbridled speculation. Co-operation is an institution of the utmost social value and as such the State can give to it, not financial privilege, but moral support and the assurance of an atmosphere of liberty to work in."—Declaration of Mussolini, November 13, 1922.

of a movement destined to solve, rapidly and effectively, the great problems of the Region."[1]

Many others, too, among the more important Guilds have associated themselves with the Fascist Trade Union and Co-operative Movement, such as the Guild of Seamen, the Guild of Mechanics, and those of farm labourers in many districts.

There is no question here of a sudden change of flag; the Guilds give in their adherence to Fascism because Fascism is now the State. For them the Social-Communist Movement created a situation that was intolerable; they had, and were bound to have, constant relations with the State and the local authorities; they are in their nature public institutions and, as such, cannot go in for the class war. They fight rather for a sphere of action, for more and more recognition as autonomous, true, and faithful public servants. Their function was to increase and perfect production, to protect the consumer and to serve the State, whether "bourgeois" or not, and they were placed in an equivocal position, and against the State by a movement which insisted that its members must wage the "class war" and threaten "revolution." Under such circumstances the State could not consider them as its friends.

In the last analysis the "lotta di capacita" (competition of capability) was inaugurated by the Productive Guilds; substituting functional competition in the public interest for a sterile "class war," a splendid effort of social construction. These Guilds, in certain localities and provinces,

[1] *Il Lavoro Co-operativo*, the official organ of the Italian (Fascist) Syndicate of Italian Co-operatives, May 2, 1923.

have a controlling influence on the whole economic life. They cannot extend their activity by actually enlarging and multiplying their institutions because they lack capital and would encounter grave opposition from private enterprises. If they want to make further progress, they will have to collaborate with private enterprises. The field for such collaboration is a wide one. It may include a whole series of new supplementary undertakings needed either by the Guilds, the private firms, or by the public. These undertakings should be founded, financed, and managed by the Guilds in conjunction with the private employers and the consumers, and also with the State or the public bodies concerned.[1]

Fascism seems to pave the way for such a departure. It has succeeded, as we have said, in the province of Ravenna, in linking up (sometimes by rather violent methods) the two powerful Trade Union Movements of the province—the Socialist and the Republican ; each of these was the base of a strong Guildist organization, comprising hundreds of Guilds in all branches of production and distribution. These two organizations have, till now, been in competition for political reasons; united they will form a splendid institution, capable of undertaking vast social tasks. Considering the Fascist tendency towards collaboration and corporate action, it seems likely that, in the future, they will ally themselves with private producers and consumers and become a Regulative Guild, actually directing and developing the

[1] *Vide* my article, "Guild Tendencies in Italy," *International Labour Review*, May 1923.

economic life of the province in the public interest.

There are, then, on the one hand, the Corporations with which the producers are affiliated by means of their Trade Unions, whose function it is to formulate and enforce regulations regarding industry and, on the other hand, there are in course of formation, other types of Regulative Guilds which actually produce and distribute.

It is not necessary, at least for the present, to give a special legal constitution to the Guilds of this last type. They may have functional autonomy. It is evident, however, that the Producing Guilds must obey the regulations laid down by the Regulative Guild pure and simple, just as other business undertakings, whether public or private, must obey them.

We cannot do more here than point out what seems most essential in the Trade Union and Guildist policy of Fascism without dwelling on those episodes which may be considered as transitory in view of the extraordinary circumstances of the early phases of Fascism and its present character and position. We must, however, call attention to one fact, already mentioned, that Fascism, in which Trade Unionism is so marked a feature, cannot be called reactionary in the ordinary sense.

We have seen how Fascism was forced to hasten its advance towards the seizure of the Government by the action of certain groups of employers, who, seeing that National Trade Unionism meant business, and would demand sacrifices from them, began to intrigue against it. After the march on Rome,

the Fascist Trade Unions increased their pressure on employers, and in many cases imposed great sacrifices on them, especially on the land-owners.[1]

In many rural districts Fascist Trade Unions have introduced compulsory tillage in order to give permanent employment to agricultural labourers, migratory and often unemployed, and one must admit that Fascist Unions of tenants, land-owners and peasants have persuaded their members, without much difficulty, to reorganize their farms in order to give work to the farm labourers, while retrograde farmers have yielded to the request only under compulsion. Some of the newer Fascist Industrial Unions maintain now that the lower wages accepted by the workers should be compensated by the guarantee from the employers of permanent work at a minimum wage, which is a sound Guildist claim. There are well-attested cases of the seizing of farms, ships, and factories by the Fascist Unions when the proprietors would not concede their "just" demands or when agreements had been infringed.

At present there is open conflict between Fascist Trade Unionists and associations of land-owners.[2]

[1] It is true that in many cases the Fascist Trade Unions were obliged to accept a reduction of wages, and worse conditions in other respects, and that they dare not strike; these phenomena are taking place in all countries just now and are due to the world crisis in production. The difference between Fascist organizers and other Trade Union organizers is that the former say frankly that, for the time being, wages must be reduced owing to present conditions in industry, while the latter are unwilling to recognize the necessity.

[2] In industry, especially among skilled workers, the Fascist unions are not as yet very strong, and disputes between them and the employers are not very acute.

"The less intelligent owners, those who," in the words of a report issued by the Corporation of Agriculture, April 20, 1923, "identify their country with the propertied class, who saluted Fascism with delight as a reaction, pure and simple, intended to replace the working class in that condition of slavery and destitution, material and spiritual, in which they existed for so many years, thus exposing the national flag to disparagement and dislike," refuse now to enter the Corporation of Agriculture, because they are afraid of being outvoted by the skilled workmen and the labourers acting together; they do not approve of the control of the Corporations because they dread "the growing power of monopolistic Trade Unionism which will end by identifying itself with the State itself," and because "it limits the free management of the farms." [1]

In other words, the proprietors are afraid of the Trade Union monopoly and Trade Union control which the Fascist Unions seem likely to establish over their farms, and want to be free from the limitations—moral and material—which will undoubtedly be set, by the Corporations, free, that is to say, to pursue their class war.

We quote in full the following significant warning from an authoritative Fascist organizer, a warning repeated by many of his colleagues:

"Everyone knows—hypocrisy would be useless—that we conquered by force the subversive parties and Labour organizations when those land-owners were giving way to them without resistance and

[1] From a report of the General Confederation of Agriculturists (May 16, 1923).

without any fight against the red flag that seemed invincible. The fact is that after having broken down the 'red' organizations, we saw at once that we could not leave the disorganized workers in the power of the employers, but that it was necessary to form them into new bodies that would defend the just rights of Labour, encouraging the workers at the same time to throw themselves as good citizens into the work of production.

"And this is why we feel that the employers' organizations must be dissolved and formed anew for, having been formed during a period of class war, they are imbued with class feeling. For not a few of the supporters of these old organizations have thought of Fascism, and still think of it, as a reactionary movement which would allow the employer to reinstate, just as before, those unutterable systems which belonged to the dark ages, by which the masters, after a popular demonstration of 'red' Trade Unionism, would be allowed to commit any excesses they thought fit. According to these fine gentlemen, the Fascists and the Fascist State ought to intervene to moderate the demands of Labour, but never to limit the profits of Capital.

"No, by God!

"No, it is not for this that two thousand Fascisti have died, and that two hundred thousand Black Shirts are still prepared to die.

"Yes, we say, and repeat to all the winds of heaven, that Fascism is above bourgeoisie and proletariate. These higher laws are for the whole country, for all men alike. If ever Fascism shows partiality, that partiality will be its death warrant.

"I say this, I, who was once a determined organizer of land-owners, at a time when the State had no idea how to defend production and the owners of the soil, when the land-owners used to demand compulsory arbitration and free labour. To-day the Fascist Party and the Fascist Corporations present an organization which unites all the forces of production and makes an end of misunderstanding, bringing about a real collaboration between Capital and Labour.

"To-day, intelligent and honest Labour is with us. But the older landlords who have already forgotten the years of Social-Communist rule, hang back and talk about their independence.

"Well, we must make use of Fascist methods with these gentlemen. I, who have helped to beat the rebellious proletariate, am quite inclined to see the rebellious landlords beaten too! And I am sure it would be to everyone's advantage, both theirs and their labourers. It would prevent the resurgence of that revolutionary Trade Unionism, which will certainly be brought to life again by the overbearing character of some of these bourgeois gentlemen if Italian Fascism does not succeed in bringing them under control and making them respect its laws.

"It would be too unjust—though, of course, it might be convenient for some people—if operatives, employees, and professionals, were forced to submit to sacrifices by no means negligible (reduction of wages, rise of rents, and the imposition of new taxes), while employers' associations and individual landlords were left independent and entirely free from the control of Fascism and of

those Fascist organizations which ought to be, now as always, superior to all distinctions of bourgeoisie and proletariate.

"If this is Fascist law, the dilemma is simple: either Fascism organizes both Labour and employers, and undertakes to arbitrate between them and compose their differences, or else Fascism must leave Labour free so that it may defend, as best it can, its own interests and its own rights of category and of class.

"If then Fascism were to intervene only to moderate the demands of Labour, and not to limit those of Capital, it would be true to say that we had been—consciously or unconsciously—the instruments of so-called *bourgeois reaction*. And in this case class war would once more triumph, both now and in the future, Fascism having failed in its attempt to intervene as arbitrator and to exact submission alike from worker and employer.

"So it seems that, if it is absolutely essential to prevent tumult and quarrels, and if we intend to retain property as a social function, there would be no harm in adopting, for the sake of bringing about *reasonable collaboration of all classes*, some coercive measures against some of the employers' associations and some reactionary land-owners.

"The reconstruction which Italy asks for must rise superior to every claim of private right or trade interest, and I am convinced—and many other Fascisti—that if we want to avoid disappointments, disputes, and abuses, one must be prepared to be a bit arbitrary and dictatorial." [1]

[1] Baroncini, in the *Assalto*, official organ of the National Fascist Party for the province of Bologna, April 15 and 22, 1923.

Another Fascist organizer, interviewed by the *Nuovo Paese* of Rome (March 4, 1923), with reference to the action of the Corporations in case of resistance from employers' associations, said: "Such cases would be referred at once to the special committee, and if a peaceful solution could not be arrived at, the Confederation would intervene in the dispute. If that failed, then the State would intervene in whatever way and by whatever organs seemed suitable to the matter in dispute. Beyond State intervention, there might be Fascist action—of the nature of a strike; but not like that of the Socialists, destructive of wealth. Our strike would have a different moral character; that of protesting against unreasonable employers and capitalists. Finally, if all these measures failed, the Fascist Corporations would not oppose occupying the factories and workshops and carrying them on themselves, but in the name of the State and with its consent.

"Such occupation need not alarm anyone. It would be the final appeal, which would be resorted to only in case of the failure of all legal and pacific negotiations. An experiment of such occupation was made at Perugia, and in several farms in the province of Siena. They were not intended as methods of expropriation, nor could such experiments ever have that purpose in the future, since we are entirely opposed to any class dictatorship."

Thus the organized employers, who accept Fascist politics, have become dissatisfied with its Trade Union tactics. They have backed "reconciliation between Labour and Capital" because it

went with that destruction of Social-Communist monopoly, which was very much to their interest, and because they hoped that the reconciliation would be based on common exploitation of the State. If they were able to exploit the State in a thousand ways, the question of Labour conditions would become of secondary importance. Any rise in wages would be paid by the public. The State, however, would not permit itself to be exploited, and the Fascist Trade Unions would not allow them to exploit the public, so the capitalists were disappointed.

Moreover, since Trade Unionism is the determining force in Fascism itself, these capitalist speculators finally turned against political Fascism. The proletariate, in the early days, had been beaten in the political field as well as the economic, now it is the turn of the capitalist speculators who, if they insist on their class war, will be beaten in the economic field. For the Corporations are not ends in themselves, but an organ of the State, a "buttress of Fascism and the backbone of the State" (*Resto del Carlino*, March 16, 1923), which means that the employers will have to submit in the end.

One cannot help seeing that great changes are going on in the class war and all that it implies.

It is interesting to notice that while many of the big land-owners and large farmers are conservative and unprogressive, many farmers who manage their own farms and skilled agriculturists of various kinds, who come into close contact with Labour, are beginning to develop new class

sympathies as producers and citizens. "They feel that in order to get the better of the class of landlords who are largely absentees, thinking only of their selfish interests, they must find support among the organized workers," to quote from "Instructions for the Constitution of Agricultural Unions of Employers and Experts," forming part of the Confederation of National Corporations.

This is certainly a new and noteworthy result, likely to prove fruitful in determining the new relations between economic classes.

None of the Corporations, which are in course of formation, have, as yet, exercised their full influence ; one of the most active, after that of agriculture, is the Corporation of the School, which has drawn up educational reforms which Government has already accepted and brought into action ; the Corporation of Intellectual Professions and that of Arts are also noteworthy ; the Corporation of the Theatre is trying to put a stop to the exploitation of the artists by profiteering managers ; the Corporation of Employees caters for all private employees in separate branches from Government employees. A Corporation of Public Health has just been founded which includes associations of doctors, chemists, midwives, and veterinary surgeons. The National Corporation of Industry and Commerce is just beginning to function.

There is a general atmosphere of activity and willingness to work ; the Corporations stimulate and encourage all productive action, and are ready everywhere to take the initiative ; they do not, by any means, limit themselves to dealing with Labour conditions. A new spirit is spreading,

especially among the working class. The distribution of rewards among the various agents of production is no longer decided merely by strength; development and improvement of method are considered. The Corporations, by organizing technical and managerial capacity together with Labour, are introducing an entirely new tone into industry, which will certainly further national interests.

The opinion of the Corporations has great weight with the State. For instance, there was much talk in the early days of Fascist Government of handing over the State railways to private management, because their deficit is enormous. This is due to various economic reasons, but chiefly to the excessive staff of operatives and employees, and to their unrest. But, under the new regime, the service of the railways is improved, largely through the collaboration of the railway workers themselves. For this reason the Fascist Railway Union pronounced against the cession of the railways to private firms, and no more is being said about it; but the whole railway system is being reorganized and superfluous workers dismissed, and it is hoped that in a couple of years the deficit will have disappeared and the whole system will be working efficiently.

Other Trade Union organizations, such as the Confederation of Labour and the Confederation under the direction of the "Popular Catholic" Party, have lost many members, and for the moment have hardly made up their minds what line to take. The Confederation of Labour is still pretty strong in industry; just recently it got a

majority in the election of shop stewards for Turin factories ; the minority are Fascisti, but majority and minority work together. In some provinces agricultural labour contracts were made jointly by the old and the new organizations.

In certain localities, where the quarrel between the "reds" and the Fascisti had its origin before Fascist times, there is still acute dissension, not without violence on both sides against both person and property, but the situation is improving day by day. For instance, the Socialist organization, both Trade Union and political, was able to take part freely in the referendum for and against municipalization at Genoa (May 20, 1923), and gain the day for municipalization against the Fascisti.

The affiliation of the old organizations to the Corporations is rendered difficult, not so much on principal as for political, sentimental, and personal reasons. The national principle is now recognized by all organizations. The whole proletariate has now become an integral part of the Nation : a result of the utmost historic importance ; the one definite result of a long tumultuous struggle.

One may say that the *Carta di Carnao* has become the ideal and the goal of the pioneers of national progress. But while the Fascisti think it necessary to build a bridge between the present and the future—a bridge consisting of the Corporations—d'Annunzio's followers prefer to organize themselves in separate unions of manual and brain workers, excluding employers, and are now actually preparing a constituent assembly of Trade Unions,

which would be the centre of a new national organization of all unions which accept explicitly, now and henceforth, the *Carta di Carnaro* as their economic and political programme.

A detailed examination of what is going on just now in Italy brings to light the birth of a new functional democracy, desiring, unlike political democracy, to serve and not to exploit the State, which will be a new engine for driving ahead, constructively and collectively, and will establish an equilibrium of a new kind, not static, but dynamic.

(B) "Gruppi di Competenza."

The idea of re-ordering the State on a basis of efficiency and ability has been from the first a main characteristic of Fascism, and one which has been singularly lacking in every other Government. This idea has taken form in the "Groups of Competence," which are intended as a kind of prelude to Vocational Councils, as Mussolini pointed out in a statement which appeared May 7, 1923.

The nature and functions of these Groups were clearly stated by Massimi Rocca, National Secretary for "Groups of Competence" before Fascism came into power: "In view of the rapid development of the party, which has made it already the principal determining force in Italian politics and will very soon make it the decisive and dominant force, it must, without delay, think of its coming responsibility and prepare the organization required for a possible Government, and one that will serve the needs of the country at the present crisis. The party is, in fact, engaged in

forming the organs necessary for the direction of Italian affairs ; it has grouped the workers into Trade Unions, and in some regions the employers as well. A true disciplined army has been created for the maintenance of order and the defence of national prestige ; and, as a party, in the strict sense of the word, it fulfils, day by day, besides its spiritual and political functions, that of bringing into harmony the conflicting interests of the various classes ; all this is nothing short of an attempt to foster the organic growth of the State of the future, which will not suppress but will select its parliamentary assemblies and will entrust to them all questions of general politics, and especially foreign politics, while it will summon, for the solution of other problems, technical Councils of a novel character, elected by professional associations.

"For one cannot help seeing that the purely political problems which agitated Society during the last century are now thrown into the shade, and to a great extent superseded by economic and technical problems which cannot well be settled by an interchange of opinion. For their solution, individual knowledge and capacity are needed, not oratory and a crowd.

"Thus the crucial and urgent questions of our public life at the present day do not turn on political rights which no one wants to trample on, so long as they are accompanied by duties and responsibilities, but on railways, ports, agriculture, industry, and commerce, and all those other concrete functions on which the existence of the Nation really depends.

" One begins to understand that a new road in the south of Italy, a new quay in a port, a kilometre of railway, an improvement in agriculture, or the equipment of a laboratory, might be much more important than a whole session of Parliament.

" A party like ours—which understands the importance of technical problems and intends to make public life at once more spiritual and more practical, classifying men and women according to the nature of their productive capacity, and no longer by the badge of a party—ought to give its mind to creating the organization for a new directing class charged with the reconstruction of Italian life in its practical aspect. For this purpose, in the Constitution (Statuto) of the party, the so-called ' Gruppi di Competenza ' were instituted, which are meant to seek out and form into groups the most capable people in every department of productive activity, in order that, disregarding party and all considerations of abstract politics, their responsible and authoritative advice may be brought to bear, and may prevail in all economic questions of real importance to classes of the people, and to the State or to the country.

" From this statement of their purpose it is easy to see what these groups should be and what they should not be. First of all, in order to avoid any misapprehension, they must not form a duplicate of the National Trade Unions, not even those of the intellectual and middle class ; the Unions are mass formations where, although producers are organized according to their social function, yet they are grouped rather with regard to number than to individual capacity for the

purpose of defending their special and, above all, their economic interests. Moreover, producers are here separated in accordance with the class to which they belong, or more accurately, according to the task, more or less managerial or executive, assigned to them in their special branch of production. There would be a Union of professionals, another of technical directors, a third of working mechanics, a fourth (if you like) of industrial entrepreneurs, and above all these the National Corporations and the party would exercise a co-ordinating and regulative function. This is a very different matter from a Trade Union in which entrepreneurs, professionals, and operatives were all grouped together.

"The 'Gruppo di Competenza' is, on the other hand, a small nucleus of persons who, as members of the Group, have no individual or class interests, specific or immediate, to defend; a nucleus in which the manufacturer may find himself alongside the engineer and the skilled mechanic, and may often be associated with them in considering and deciding upon some particular question of interest to their district or to the Government. For the 'Gruppi di Competenza' are chiefly consultative; their business is research rather than decision: their office, which they fulfil sometimes by request, sometimes spontaneously, is to call the attention of Parliament and the State or of the Trade Unions to certain situations or certain requirements. But their function, in its more spiritual character, is to promote good relations between the various classes and various trades, between the Trade Unions and the party, between

different localities and their local interests, and to make the general welfare of the whole community prevail by merging smaller individual aims and desires into a well-ordered system. A function, this, which is not compatible with large numbers nor with democratic methods of election and discussion; for this reason the Groups will remain under the direct supervision of the party executive, and it will be better that they should not be formed until really competent and suitable people have been found for them. Finally, it is important that they should not become too large; it would really be better for them to subdivide and specialize than to become unwieldy."

The "Gruppi di Competenza" are local, provincial and national; the members of the local and provincial Groups are selected by various Fascist organizations, political and Trade Union; those of the national Groups are chosen by the national secretary of the Groups in consultation with the directors of the party, preferably from the members of local and provincial Groups, but also from others, even persons who are not members of the Fascist Party, as is often the case with technical and scientific men.

This movement in favour of giving authority to experts rather than to the multitude has been strengthened by success, and is developing locally and nationally. There are "Gruppi di Competenza" for Constitutional Reform, for the Reform of Public Administration, for the colonies and many others; and State action has been to a great extent guided by their advice. Various local Groups are doing useful work in systema-

tizing local administration and solving local problems, such as land reclamation and the installation of electric-power centres.

(C) VOLUNTEER MILITIA FOR THE LAND.

We pointed out in a former chapter how patriotism finds expression in voluntary national service, and how important this may be made in the work of reconstruction. The volunteer militia of the land, which is spreading now all over Italy, has for its aim to spread modern scientific and technical improvements in agriculture throughout the vast rural population ; its intention is to organize bands of volunteers to fight the diseases of plants and animals, for reforestation, for organizing the various forms of agricultural Co-operatives for the acquisition of land and the sale and transformation of produce ; in short, to render permanent assistance in the organization of agriculture and its allied industries. There were a great many capable people, both within and without the ranks of Fascism, who were anxious to bring their own special knowledge to the assistance of this truly original scheme. Government supported it, and the State Agriculture Schools and Institutes were to train the volunteers who afterwards, in their turn, would assist the Institutes in fostering agricultural progress.

For some years the Boy Scouts had formed agricultural squadrons who had given a very good account of themselves, and these were now fused with the "Militia of the Land." A sister organization was the "Marine Militia," which looks after the navigability of rivers and restocking them with

fish and the whole fishing industry of Italy, which is very much behind other countries in technique.

(D) COMMITTEES OF PUBLIC WORKS.

For the alleviation of unemployment the Fascisti had recourse to all the methods that had been recommended by the Socialists and the Popular Party, including compulsory tillage, which they carried out, however, more rationally and in a less haphazard manner. In addition to these, they thought out and tried new methods. The most significant of these was initiated in Romagna, and consisted in the continuation in new forms of the traditional Co-operative and Trade Union activity of the Socialists and Republicans. It was the creation, through the financial assistance of all dwellers in the locality, of permanent sources of employment, doing really useful work.

Work committees (Comitati delle Opere) were constituted for the purpose, who taxed the incomes, officially ascertained, of the inhabitants; the levy varied from 5 per cent. to 18 per cent. on incomes varying from 2,000 lire to 30,000 lire per annum, and above that income, 20 per cent. The working-class contributed to the fund thus obtained by a small diminution of their wages.

The funds so obtained were not a dead loss to the contributors, for they were invested as shares in agricultural and industrial undertakings, legally constituted. These undertakings were of various kinds, and each contributor could choose which of them his money should be placed in. At Cesena (Romagna), where the experiment began, part of

the fund raised by the levy was invested in a Co-operative factory, already existing, for the manufacture of agricultural products, and part in a new tobacco factory. About five hundred workmen found new and permanent occupation by this new move, which, moreover, was most beneficial to the district economically. The same comity of Cesena assumed the management of a sulphur mine, which had been abandoned by private capitalists, and which gave employment to about five hundred men.

The possibilities inherent in this new device for increasing production in the public interest and developing local and national resources, rapidly seized the imagination, and similar works were started at once in many localities. The movement has already spread to such an extent that it has become necessary to appoint a Committee of Public Works to organize it nationally.

The great point is that this scheme makes no demands on the State, but works of itself. It does not go in for speculative undertakings that may yield large profits, but for such as are really needed locally, but had not yet been started—or had been abandoned—just because they could not yield big profits.

The scheme is based on a real "levy" which is submitted to, for the most part, voluntarily—even enthusiastically—and to which reactionary people have to submit. This new development of a public conscience is growing, and there is no reason to think that it will not continue and produce lasting effects on national reconstruction.

(E) Some New Departures in State Administration.

"Only a Government that knows how to take 'full powers,' or to make Parliament grant them, could now solve the problems of the bureaucracy in Italy." So writes Professor Cabiati (Liberal, not Fascist), November 2, 1922. A couple of weeks later, the Fascist Government did obtain "full powers" from Parliament for the reform of taxation and State administration, and it is now making great efforts to break down the bureaucratic oligarchy which has deformed the life of the country.

Such reform, even if completely carried out, cannot, in itself and by itself, constitute a new order of things, but it can provide opportunity for new developments; this must be the next step, and it is something very new for Italy to have a Government ready to take it.

We are in a period of transition with a definite task marked out for us: the liquidation of liabilities and the preparation of new organs of government. "There are problems that must be solved; we have on our hands a heavy inherited debt that must be paid; in fact all the Government accomplishes to-day is work in arrears, a sweeping up of refuse that was hampering the Nation. Later will come the great and serious, but joyful work of reconstruction" (Mussolini, in a speech, March 13, 1923).

Mussolini demands "strict public finance." The expenditure of all State departments is cut down, their number reduced and also that of the minor

State offices; the number of workmen, clerks, and also of high functionaries in State employ has been reduced. The Government has abolished 553 law courts, a reform that no other Government would have ventured on for fear of interfering with local and electoral interests. The Army and Navy have been reorganized, the number of higher officers reduced, and a diminution of expenditure effected below the estimates. By means of new investigations of incomes liable to taxation, an additional 100,000 taxpayers have been added to the list, from such classes as farmers and operatives, who formerly paid little or no taxes; but the tax on certain big industries was also raised. By these measures the Government faced unpopularity, for they were up against the interests both of the rich and the moderately poor. The Government declared itself as "anti-protectionist," but it could not, of course, break up all the machinery of protection at a blow; in any case it did suspend, diminish, or abolish all customs, such as those on grain, rice (a food of the people), flour, thus going against the interests of the great land-owners; the Government has also issued orders to the prefects that severe measures should be taken to provide that a diminution in the cost of bread should correspond with a lower price for flour. The Government has intervened energetically, in certain cases, against speculators, as, for instance, against the Lombardy farmers, who would not lower the price of milk, threatening them with a sequestration of all milk products. The Government has done away with the rent restriction laws, but has, at

the same time, created local organizations of control in defence of the population against high prices in dwellings.

Many other provisions have been made by the Government which we cannot follow here. The fact remains that the financial dictatorship has sensibly improved the national finances and made a start in their rehabilitation, and that the rhythm of employment, both in State administration and in the country, has been much accelerated.

It made a great sensation all over the world when the Fascist Government announced that it was going to abandon State monopolies, and this intention was almost universally looked on as a measure in favour of private speculation; whereas it was really to get rid of functions which, in the hands of the State, were bound to become bureaucratic without any corresponding gain to the public. In this direction the Government is proceeding with the utmost caution for the protection of the consumer against profiteers.

The result in the case of the matches monopoly is interesting. Hitherto the State has not held the monopoly of making matches, but only of selling them; now the State has required the manufacturers to form themselves into a syndicate to which it has granted the private monopoly of manufacturing and selling matches. For this privilege the syndicate pays an annual tax to the State, corresponding to the net profits which the State used to derive from selling matches; the syndicate, however, cannot change the price of matches without the consent of the State and is obliged to put on the market matches of good

quality; the State may revise, every two years, the tax on the syndicate, if it makes undue profits, originating in a decline in the price of raw materials used in the manufacture of matches. Export trade is free. By this reform, the State frees itself, on the one hand, from complicated business relations with a great number of manufacturers; on the other hand, by prohibiting the opening of new factories, it can assure the life of all match factories, great and small, that have hitherto served it, and can protect the consumer as well.

The Government has abolished the State monopoly on life insurances, retaining, however, the very prosperous national institution of life insurance, as a business concern and an organ of the State, in competition with private insurance companies; these latter have been put under severe State control; the State Insurance Company has the important function of regulating the insurance market and of investing the capital at its disposal, and its profits, in industrial enterprises of national importance, whether private or public.[1] In short, private initiative is re-established, but at the same time controlled and stimulated in this very important branch of activity.

The Postmaster-General, Duca di Cesarò, has introduced in his administration the principle of co-partnership and participation in profits. The private companies, the Co-operatives of telephone

[1] It has lately invested several million lire in a fishing company equipped for modern methods of deep-sea fishing, a new industry in Italy.

employees and the Co-operatives of telephone users, who are going to take over the management of certain branches of the service, will be required to hand over to the State a number of shares corresponding in value to the plant, lines, etc., or else to pay a certain fixed sum as rent and, in addition, a percentage on net profits. Of course a certain degree of State control will accompany State co-partnership and participate in profits.

It is noteworthy that in case of granting concession of certain branches of the postal, telephone or telegraph services, that "other things being equal a preference will be given to Co-operatives of ex-soldiers," according to the decree of the Postmaster-General.

The same decisions have been made with regard to future railway concessions: thus the "Guild of Persons Employed on the Secondary Railways" were able, recently, to put forward a request that the management, under State control, of certain lines of secondary railways, should be confided to them.

Thus the State will hand over its industrial undertakings, in whole or in part, to those public bodies or Guilds which can give the best guarantee of efficiency and of public spirit.

Faithful to these principles, the State has handed over the utilization and management of the installation of the hot springs at Salsomaggiore—one of the most important spas in the world—to the "Co-operative of Soldiers disabled in the War"—and not to the speculative firm that applied for it.

The Government has also faced the question of State participation in those private enterprises which, for political and national reasons, are strictly necessary. The first step in this direction was made by the entrance of the State, with seventy million lire, into the "Società Ansaldo," which makes use of an electric process in the manufacture of iron, and which, from industrial and financial causes, was in a hopeless position. The State as shareholder in private enterprises is not unknown in Great Britain; in Italy this method of State participation may be extended to the Guilds, which are financed largely at present by the State bank for co-operation; the State as shareholder has naturally a better chance of exercising control than the State as banker.

(F) Volunteer Militia of National Security.

Directly it came into power Fascism succeeded in transforming the centrifugal (anti-State) majority in the country and in its own ranks into a centripetal (pro-State) force: its own irregular armed battalions became a voluntary militia, recognized by the law, and all other bands of irregular troops were either absorbed or disarmed. By this measure order was rapidly restored in the country, which had been disturbed by sporadic outbursts of "stupid, unpleasant, and unheroic vandalism" (Mussolini) among undisciplined Fascisti and by the provocative action of their adversaries. Violence came to an end. The Civil War was over.[1]

[1] The famous castor-oil cure is now punished by thirty months in prison.

The volunteer militia secured the Government against the possibility of counter-revolution and permitted it to develop its plans in peace. Its task was to inculcate a respect for the law on all transgressors, Fascisti included. It restrains the military spirit of the younger generation and "creates in it a spirit of service and an ideal of discipline." Its services have enabled the Government to abolish the "Regia Guardia," a special body of police created after the war, and thus save hundreds of million lire per annum, for the militia has only a small staff of officers with continuous salaries, while all the rest of its members serve gratuitously—troops and ordinary officers receiving a small indemnity, and that only in special cases.

Recently, for the better discipline of the rank and file of the Fascist Party, which had grown rapidly from every rank and class till it had reached 550,000 members, it was decided that all members of the party must join the volunteer militia, which means that they must submit to a severe military code. This decision has had already an excellent result, and will certainly put an end to all illegality which might have arisen among Fascist members.

In order to control its rapid growth, it was also decided to suspend, for a time, the enrolment of new members of the party, and to purge its ranks of all untrustworthy and insubordinate members who had joined the movement, when it was victorious, for selfish ends. Thus Fascism declares its determination "to transform itself from a movement of mere numbers into a movement of chosen men."

This book was written while the more important aspects of Fascism were in course of development and while its ideas and proposals were becoming gradually clearer, while it was itself being transformed. The reader must not therefore expect conclusions, and must pardon the omissions and obvious defects of the book. He will find in it truths that are destined to exert a profound influence, rather than a rigid statement of a series of facts and events, for history, especially very recent history, presents the collective mind at a given moment; it must include a psychological study, and is liable to be betrayed by the event which often does not follow a logical development. It is the impression made by events, great and small, on the collective mind, that counts in the end.

The fate of Fascism will depend on the extent to which it is able to accomplish its self-chosen tasks and those assigned to it by circumstances before the country becomes tired of waiting. The present period of transition must not last too long. Fascism is pitted against time in a dramatic race. Will it pass the pragmatic test? Will it work? Time will decide. If, by its present process of internal transformation, it succeeds in stimulating, widely and rapidly, "*the voluntary conscription of those who know and those who can*" for the disinterested service of the country, Fascism may carry out its programme undisturbed.[1]

The secret of Fascist success in its earliest phase lay in the voluntary principle; the people

[1] "La Cosrizione," by G. Borelli, Liberal in *Resto del Carlino,* May 23, 1923.

who flowed in from every side voluntarily were combatants in the military sense; their temper suited their task. When the Civil War came to an end the nature of the task changed, and a new militia was needed of a different temper to suit a different task, a militia of civilian volunteers, of every capacity and efficiency and drawn from every class of the community. "Yesterday we needed soldiers, to-day we need brains," wrote a Fascist leader.

Many who had helped to wage the Civil War had to give way to the men who were called upon to work at social reconstruction. Fascism knows this and admits it frankly. It is now engaged in reorganizing its ranks in a spirit of the strictest self-criticism and selection and is, with the utmost inpartiality, enlisting efficiency and competency wherever they can be found, either from other parties or outside politics altogether. By these means, and by direct contact with other movements, it is constantly widening and consolidating its basis.

"There are many reasons why Fascism is, pre-eminently, a national movement: motives connected with war and others with reconstruction—patriotic enthusiasm and austere silent devotion. Soldiers of the war, ready for revolution, are brought face to face with the idea of a State run on the lines of functional responsibility and a regime of efficiency. These diverse forms of patriotism imply no contradiction; they afford the best proof that Fascism reflects the Nation as it exists to-day and interprets its needs.

"What is needed above all is to demilitarize

men's minds, to belittle the theatrical appeal of revolution, to restore a humane conception of life, to cure our country of that feverish malady, the evil heritage of war, that has for symptoms these rhetorical and fiery demonstrations.

"Italian culture has a tradition behind it that sustains and carries back the all too brief tradition of our State; let us return to the road marked out by that tradition, and follow it onwards, not to the past but to the future; it will lead us century by century towards an ideal worthy of Italy." [1]

Fascism will go through many changes of form, but, in substance, it cannot fail to grow by its process of selecting, absorbing, assimilating. It has achieved the task of turning patriotism to account in the work of reconstruction. This new source of strength it has infused into the life of the country.

Whatever may be the fate of Fascism as a Government, its influence cannot die. "Our future must be the offspring of Fascism, just as, in Russia, the future must be the offspring of Bolshevism."[2]

[1] Francesco Meriano, in *Resto del Carlino*.
[2] Giuseppe Prezzolini, in *Revoluzione Liberale*, 1922.

APPENDIX I

THE ITALIAN PROVINCE OF CARNARO

OUTLINE OF A NEW CONSTITUTION FOR THE FREE STATE OF FIUME

Quis Contra Nos?

STATUTUM ET ORDINA
TUM EST
JURO EGO
SI SPIRITUS PRO NOBIS
QUIS CONTRA NOS?

FIUME OF ITALY,
27 August, 1920.

THE ENDURING WILL OF THE PEOPLE

FIUME, for centuries a free commune of ancient Italy, declared her full and complete surrender to the mother-country on October 10, 1918.

Her claim is threefold, like the impenetrable armour of Roman legend.

Fiume is warden of the Italian marches, the furthest stronghold of Italian culture, the most

distant land that bears the imprint of Dante. From century to century through all vicissitudes, through strife and anguish, Dante's Carnaro has done faithful service to Italy. From her as from a centre the spiritual life of Italy has shone forth and still shines forth over shores and islands, from Volosca to Laurana, from Moschiena to Albona, from Veglio to Lussino, from Cherso to Arbe.

This is her claim from history.

Fiume, as of old Tarsatica, placed at the southern end of the Liburnian rampart, stretches thence along the Julian Alps and is contained entirely within that boundary which science, tradition, and history alike confirm as the sacred confines of Italy.

This is her claim from position.

Fiume, with will unwavering and heroic courage, overcoming every attack whether of force or fraud, vindicated her right, two years ago, to choose her own destiny, her own allegiance on the strength of that just principle declared to the world by some of her unjust adversaries themselves.

This is her claim founded on Roman right.

In contrast to this threefold claim stands the threefold wrong, iniquity, cupidity, and force to which Italy submits in sorrow, leaving unrecognized and unclaimed the victory that she, herself, has won.

Thus it comes to pass that the inhabitants of the free city of Fiume, faithful to their Latin origin and determined to carry out their lawful decision, are framing a new model for their con-

stitution to suit the spirit of their new life, not intending to limit that constitution to the territory which, under the title—"corpus separatum"—was assigned to the crown of Hungary, but offering it as a free alternative to any of those communities of the Adriatic which desire to break through all hindrances and rise to freedom in the name of a new Italy.

Thus, in the name of a new Italy, the people of Fiume, taking their stand on justice and on liberty, swear that they will fight to the utmost with their whole strength against any attempt to separate their land from the mother-country, and that they will defend for ever the mountain boundary of their country assigned to it by God and by Rome.

The Basis.

I

The sovereign people of Fiume, in the strength of their unassailable sovereignty, take as the centre of their Free State the "corpus separatum," with all its railways and its harbour.

But, as on the west they are determined to maintain contact with the mother-country, so, on the east, they are not prepared to renounce their claim to a frontier more just and more secure than might be assigned to them by the next happening in the give-and-take of politics or by any future treaties which they might be able to conclude with the rural and maritime communes after the proclamation of an open port and of generous statutes.

II

The Italian province of Carnaro is made up of the district of Fiume, of the islands, traditionally Venetian, which have declared by vote that they will share her fortunes; and of any neighbouring communities, which, after making a genuine application for admission, have been welcomed fraternally and in due legal form

III

The Italian province of Carnaro is a State chosen by the people which has for basis the power of productive labour and for constitution the widest and most varied forms of autonomy such as were in use during the four centuries of our glorious communal period.

IV

The province recognizes and confirms the sovereignty of all citizens without distinction of sex, race, language, class, or religion.

But above and beyond every other right she maintains the right of the producer;

abolishes or reduces excessive centralization of constitutional powers,

and subdivides offices and powers so that by their harmonious interplay communal life may grow more vigorous and abundant.

V

The province protects, defends, preserves, all popular rights and liberties;

insuring international order by justice and discipline, seeks to bring back a time of well-ordered happiness which should bring new life to a people delivered at last from a Government of lies and oppression;

her constant aim is to raise the status of her citizens and to increase their prosperity;

so that the citizenship shall be recognized by foreigners as a title of high honour just as it was in former days under the law of Rome.

VI

All citizens of the State, of both sexes, are equal, and feel themselves equal in the eye of the law.

The exercise of their constitutional rights can be neither diminished nor suppressed except by public trial and solemn condemnation.

VII

Fundamental liberties, freedom of thought and of the Press, the right to hold meetings and to form associations are guaranteed to all citizens by the Constitution.

Every form of religion is permitted and respected, and allowed to erect its own places of worship;

but no citizen may allege his creed or the rites of his religion as a reason for withdrawing from the fulfilment of duties prescribed by the law;

Misuse of statutory liberty, when its purpose is illegal and when it disturbs the public peace may be punished, as provided by the law;

But the law must in no way transgress the principle of liberty.

VIII

The Constitution guarantees to all citizens of both sexes:

primary instruction in well-lighted and healthy schools;
physical training in open-air gymnasiums, well-equipped;
paid work with a fair minimum living wage;
assistance in sickness, infirmity, and involuntary unemployment;
old age pensions;
the enjoyment of property legitimately obtained;
inviolability of the home;
" habeas corpus ";
compensation for injuries in case of judicial errors or abuse of power.

IX

The State does not recognize the ownership of property as an absolute and personal right, but regards it as one of the most useful and responsible of social functions.

No property can be reserved to anyone in unrestricted ownership; nor can it be permitted that an indolent owner should leave his property unused or should dispose of it badly, to the exclusion of anyone else.

The only legitimate title to the possession of the means of production and exchange is labour.

Labour alone is the custodian of that which is by far the most fruitful and profitable to the general well-being.

X

The harbour, station, railway lines comprised in the territory of Fiume are the inalienable and incontestable property of the State in perpetuity.

By a statute of the Free Port, the full and free use of the harbour for commerce, industry, and navigation is guaranteed to foreigners as to natives, in perfect equality of good treatment and immunity from exorbitant harbour dues and from any injury to person or goods.

XI

A National Bank of Carnaro, under State supervision, is entrusted with the issue of paper money and with all operations concerning credit.

A law for this purpose will decide methods and regulations to be followed and will point out the rights, functions, and responsibilities of the banks already in operation in the territory and of those that may be hereafter founded there.

XII

All the citizens of both sexes have the full right to choose and carry on any industry, profession, art, or craft.

Industries started or supported by foreign capital and all concessions to foreigners will be regulated by liberal legislation.

XIII

Three elements unite to inspire and control the regulation, progress, and growth of the Community:

The Citizens;

The Corporations;

The Communes.

XIV

There are three articles of belief which take precedence of all others in the Province and the federated communes:

Life is a good thing, it is fit and right that man, reborn to freedom, should lead a life that is noble and serious;

a true man is he who, day by day, renews the dedication of his manhood to his fellowmen;

labour, however humble and obscure, if well done adds to the beauty of the world.

THE CITIZENS.

XV

The following persons have the rank of citizens of Carnaro:

All citizens now on the register of the free city of Fiume;

all citizens of the federated communes;

all persons who have made application for citizenship and who have obtained it by legal decree.

XVI

Citizens are invested with all civil and political rights as soon as they reach the age of twenty.

Without distinction of sex they become electors and eligible for all careers.

XVII

Those citizens shall be deprived of political rights by formal sentence, who are

condemned by the law,

defaulters with regard to military service for the defence of the territory,

defaulters in the payment of taxes,

incorrigible parasites on the community if they are not incapacitated from labour by age or sickness.

The Corporations.

XVIII

The State represents the aspiration and effort of the people, as a community, towards material and spiritual advancement.

Those only are full citizens who give their best endeavour to add to the wealth and strength of the State; these truly are one with her in her growth and development.

Whatever be the kind of work a man does, whether of hand or brain, art or industry, design or execution, he must be a member of one of the ten Corporations who receive from the commune a general direction as to the scope of their activities, but are free to develop them in their own way and to decide among themselves as to their mutual duties and responsibilities.

XIX

The first Corporation comprises the wage-earners of industry, agriculture and commerce, small artisans, and small landholders who work their own farms, employing little other labour and that only occasionally.

The second Corporation includes all members of the technical or managerial staff in any private business, industrial or rural, with the exception of the proprietors or partners in the business.

In the third, are united all persons employed in commercial undertakings who are not actually operatives. Here again proprietors are excluded.

In the fourth, are associated together all employers engaged in industrial, agricultural, or commercial undertakings, so long as they are not merely owners of the business but—according to the spirit of the new constitution—prudent and sagacious masters of industry.

The fifth comprises all public servants, State and Communal employees of every rank.

In the sixth are to be found the intellectual section of the people; studious youth and its leaders; teachers in the public schools and students in colleges and polytechnics; sculptors, painters, decorators, architects, musicians, all those who practise the Arts, scenic or ornamental.

The seventh includes all persons belonging to the liberal professions who are not included in the former categories.

The eighth is made up of the Co-operative Societies of production and consumption, industrial and agricultural, and can only be represented by the self-chosen administrators of the Societies.

The ninth comprises all workers on the sea.

The tenth has no special trade or register or title. It is reserved for the mysterious forces of progress and adventure. It is a sort of votive offering to the genius of the unknown, to the man of the future, to the hoped-for idealization of daily work, to the liberation of the spirit of man beyond the panting effort and bloody sweat of to-day.

It is represented in the civic sanctuary by a kindled lamp bearing an ancient Tuscan inscription of the epoch of the communes, that calls up an ideal vision of human labour:

"Fatica senza fatica."

XX

Each Corporation is a legal entity and is so recognized by the State.

Chooses its own consuls;

makes known its decisions in an assembly of its own;

dictates its own terms, its own decrees and rules;

exercises autonomy under the guidance of its own wisdom and experience;

provides for its own needs and for the management of its own funds, collecting from its members a contribution in proportion to their wages, salary, business profits, or professional income;

defends in every way its own special interest and strives to improve its status;

aims at bringing to perfection the technique of its own art or calling;

seeks to improve the quality of the work carried out and to raise the standard of excellence and beauty;

enrols the humblest workers, endeavouring to encourage them to do the best work;

recognizes the duty of mutual help;

decides as to pensions for sick and infirm members;

chooses for itself symbols, emblems, music, songs, and prayers;
founds its own rules and ceremonies;

assists, as handsomely as it can, in providing enjoyment for the commune for its anniversary, fêtes, and sports by land and sea;

venerates its dead, honours its elders, and celebrates its heroes.

XXI

The relations between the Government of the province and the corporations and between the different Corporations are regulated by the methods defined in the statutes which regulate the relations between the central province and the affiliated communes and between the several communes.

The members of each Corporation form a free electoral body for choosing representatives on the Council of Governors (Provvisori).

The first place in public ceremonies is assigned to the consuls of the Corporations and their banners.

THE COMMUNES.

XXII

The ancient "potere normativo" will be re-established for all communes—the right of making laws subject to the Common Law.

They exercise all powers not specially assigned by the Constitution to the judicial, legislative and executive departments of the province.

XXIII

Each commune has full sanction to draw up its own code of municipal laws, derived from its own special customs, character, and inherited energy and from its new national life.

But each commune must apply to the province for ratification of its statutes which the commune will give.

When these statutes have been approved, accepted, and voted on by the people they can be amended only by the will of a real majority of the citizens.

XXIV

The communes have the acknowledged right to make settlements, agreements, and treaties between themselves, administrative and legislative.

But they are required to submit them to be examined by the Central Executive Power.

If the Central Power considers that such settlements, agreements, or treaties controvert the spirit of the Constitution, it sends them up for final decision to the Court of Administration.

If the Court declares them to be illegal and invalid, the Central Executive of the province makes provision for their cancellation.

XXV

If order, within a commune, should be disturbed by faction, rebellion, or plot, or by any other form of craft or violence,

if the dignity or integrity of a commune should be injured or menaced by the transgression of another,

the Executive of the province would intervene as mediator or peacemaker,

if the communal authorities agreed in requesting it to do so,

if a third of the citizens exercising political rights in the the commune itself should make the request.

XXVI

The following functions belong especially to the communes:

To provide for primary instruction, according to the regulations laid down by the Central Education Authority,

to nominate the communal judges;

to appoint and maintain the communal police;

to levy taxes;

to contract loans within the territory of the province, or even outside it, provided that the sanction of the Central Government shall have been obtained, but this will not be granted except in case of absolute necessity.

LEGISLATION.

XXVII

Two elected bodies will exercise legislative power:

The Council of Senators,

the Council of "Provvisori."[1]

XXVIII

The Senate is elected by means of direct and secret universal suffrage, by all citizens throughout the province, who have attained the age of twenty-one years and have been invested with political rights.

Any citizen who has a vote is eligible as a member of the Senate.

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[1] "Provvisori della Communita" was the title of a body of magistrates at Trieste in former times.

XXIX

Senators remain in office ten years.

They are elected in the proportion of one to every thousand electors, but in no case can their number be under thirty.

All electors form a single constituency.

The election is to be by universal suffrage and proportional representation.

XXX

The Senate has authority to make ordinances and laws with reference to the penal and civil code,

the police,

national defence,

public secondary instruction,

art,

relations between the communes and the State.

The Senate meets, as a rule, only once a year, in the month of October, for a short definite sitting.

XXXI

The Council of the Provvisori is composed of sixty delegates, elected by universal secret suffrage and proportional representation.

Ten provvisori are elected by industrial workers and agricultural labourers;

ten by seamen of all kinds;

ten by employers;

five by rural and industrial technicians;

five by the managerial staffs in private firms;

five by the teachers in the public schools, by the students in the higher schools, and by other members of the sixth Corporation;

five by the liberal professions;

five by public servants;

five by Co-operative Societies of production, of labour and of consumption.

XXXII

The provvisori remain in office two years.

They are not eligible unless they belong to the Corporation represented.

XXXIII

The Council of the Provvisori meets usually twice in the year, in the months of May and November, and uses the laconic method of debate.

It has authority to make ordinances and laws with reference to the commercial and Maritime code;

to the control of labour;
to transport;
to public works;
to treaties of commerce, customs, tariffs, and similar matters;
to technical and professional instruction;
to industry and banking;
to arts and crafts.

XXXIV

The Senate and the Council of Provvisori unite together once a year as a single body on the first of December, as a Grand National Council under the title of Arengo del Carnaro.

The Arengo discusses and deliberates
on relations with other States;
on finance and the Treasury;
on the higher studies;
on reforms of the constitution;
on extensions of liberty.

THE EXECUTIVE.

XXXV

Executive power in the province is exercised by seven ministers elected jointly by the National Assembly, the Senate, and the Council of Provvisori.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister for Finance and the Treasury, and the Minister of Public Instruction are elected by the National Assembly.

The Minister of the Interior and of Justice, the Minister of National Defence are elected by the Senate. The Council of Provvisori elects the Minister of Public Economy and the Minister of Labour.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs takes the title Prime Minister and represents the Province in intercourse with other States "primus inter pares."

XXXVI

The seven ministers, once elected, remain in office for their allotted time. They decide everything that does not interfere with current administration.

The Prime Minister presides over the discussions and has the deciding vote when the votes are equally balanced.

The ministers are elected for a year, and are not re-eligible except once.

But, after the interval of one year, they may be nominated again.

JUDICIARY POWER.

XXXVII

The Judiciary Power will be held by
magistrates
Labour judges,
judges of the High Court,
judges of the Criminal Court,
the Court of Administration.

XXXVIII

The magistrates, elected to inspire public confidence, by all the electors of the various communes in proportion to their number, decide all civil and commercial cases under the value of five thousand lira and questions of crime where the penalty of imprisonment does not last more than one year.

XXXIX

The Labour judges decide cases of controversy between employers and workers, whether wage-earners or salaried staff.

The Labour judges are grouped in "colleges," the members of each "college" being nominated by one of those "Corporations" which elect the Council of the Provvisori.

According to the following scale:
two by industrial workers and agricultural labourers;
two by all workers connected with the sea;
two by employers;
one by technical workers, industrial or agricultural;
one by the liberal professions;
one by members of the administrative staff in private firms;
one by public employees;
one by teachers, by students of the higher institutes, and by other members of the sixth Corporation;
one by the Co-operative Societies of production, of labour and of consumption.

The Labour judges have power to divide their "colleges" into branches in order to render their proceedings more rapid, they are to dispense justice with promptitude, clearness, and expedition.

A joint assembly of the branches constitutes a Court of Appeal.

XL

The judges of the High Court adjudicate on all questions civil, commercial, and penal which are not dealt with by the magistrates and the Labour judges except those which are dealt with by the judges of the Criminal Court.

The judges of the High Court constitute the Court of Appeal for sentences of magistrates.

The judges of the High Court are chosen by the Court of Administration from citizens holding the title of Doctor of Law (LL.D.).

XLI

Seven sworn citizens, assisted by two deputies and presided over by a judge of the High Court compose the Criminal Court; which tries all crimes of a political nature and all those misdemeanours which would be punished by imprisonment for more than three years.

XLII

Elected by the National Council, the Court of Administration is composed of five acting members and two supplementary.

Of the acting members, at least three, and of the supplementary members, at least one shall be chosen from Doctors of Law.

The Court of Administration deals with:

acts and decrees issued by the legislative and executive authorities to ascertain that they are in conformity with the Constitution;

any statutory conflict between the legislative and executive authorities, between the province and the communes, between one commune and another, between the province and the Corporations, between the province and private persons, between the communes and the Corporations, between the communes and private individuals;

cases of high treason against the province on the part of citizens who hold legislative or executive power;

attacks on the rights of the people;

civil contests between the province and the communes or between commune and commune;

questions regarding the rights of citizenship and naturalization,

questions referring to the competence (function) of the various magistrates and judges.

The Court of Administration has the ultimate revision of sentences and nominates by vote the judges of the High Court.

Citizens who are members of the Court of Administration are forbidden to hold any other office either in that commune or any other.

Nor may they carry on any trade or profession during the whole period that they are in office.

THE COMMANDANT.

XLIII

When the province is in extreme peril and sees that her safety depends on the will and devotion of one man who is capable of rousing and of leading all the forces of the people in a united and victorious effort, the National Council in solemn conclave in the Arengo may, voting by word of mouth, nominate a Commandant and transmit to him supreme authority without appeal.

The Council decides the period, long or short, during which he is to rule, not forgetting that in the Roman Republic the dictatorship lasted six months.

XLIV

During the period of his rule, the Commandant holds all powers —political and military, legislative and executive.

The holders of executive power assume the office of commissaries and secretaries under him.

XLV

On the expiration of the period of rule, the National Council again assembles and decides

to confirm the Commandant in his office,
or else to substitute another citizen in his place,
or else to depose him,
or even to banish him.

XLVI

Any citizen holding political rights, whether he have any office in the province or not, may be elected to the supreme office.

NATIONAL DEFENCE.

XLVII

In the province of Carnaro, all the citizens of both sexes, from seventeen to fifty-five years of age, are liable for military service for the defence of the country.

After selection has been made, men in sound health will serve in the forces of land and sea, men who are not so strong and women will serve in ambulances, hospitals, in administration, in ammunition factories, and in any other auxiliary work according to the capacity and skill of each.

XLVIII

State assistance on an ample scale is granted to all citizens who, during military service, have contracted any incurable infirmity, and to their families, if in need.

The State adopts the children of all citizens who are killed in defence of their country, assists their families in distress, and commends to the memory of future generations the names of the fallen.

XLIX

In time of peace and security, the State will not maintain a standing army; but all the nation will remain armed, as prescribed by law, and its forces by land and sea well and duly trained.

Strict military service is confined to the period of instruction or to periods when war is either actually being waged or when there is immediate danger of war.

During periods of instruction or of war, the citizen will lose none of his civil and political rights; and will be able to exercise them whenever the necessities of active service permit.

Public Instruction.

L

For any race of noble origin, culture is the best of all weapons.

For the Adriatic race, harassed for centuries by a ceaseless struggle with an unlettered usurper, culture is more than a weapon; like faith and justice, it is an unconquerable force.

For the people of Fiume at the moment of her rebirth to liberty, it becomes the instrument more helpful than any other against the insidious plots that have encircled her for centuries.

Culture is the preservative against corruption; the buttress against ruin.

In Dante's Carnaro the culture of the language of Dante is the custodian of that which has ever been reckoned as the most precious treasure of the people, the highest testimony to the nobility of their origin, the chief sign of their moral right of rule.

That moral right is what the new State must fight for. On its will to victory is founded the exaltation of the human ideal.

The new State, with unity completed, liberty achieved, justice enthroned, must make it her first duty to defend, preserve, and fight for unity, liberty, justice in the spirit of man.

The culture of Rome must be here in our midst and the culture of Italy.

For this cause the Italian province of Carnaro makes education—the culture of her people—the crown and summit of her Constitution, esteems the treasure of Latin culture as the foundation of her welfare.

LI

The city of Fiume will have a free University, housed in a spacious building, capable of accommodating a great number of students and ruled by its own special ordinances.

There will be in the city of Fiume, a School of Painting, a School of Decorative Art, a School of Music free from any legal interference, conducted in a candid and open spirit under the guidance of a judgment acute enough to get rid of the incumbrance of the inefficient, to choose the best students from among the good and to assist the best in the discovery of new possibilities in the rendering of human sentiment.

LII

The secondary schools will be under the supervision of the Senate; the technical and professional schools under that of the Council of the Provvisori; higher education, under that of the National Council.

In every school and in every commune the Italian language will have the first place.

In secondary schools the teaching of the various dialects spoken in the Italian province of Carnaro will be obligatory.

Primary instruction will be given in the language spoken by the majority of the inhabitants of each commune and also in parallel classes in that spoken by the minority.

If any commune tries to evade the obligation of providing those double courses of instruction the Central Government of the province reserves its right to provide them at the cost of the commune.

LIII

An Educational Council decides upon the nature and method of primary instruction which is compulsory in the schools of all communes.

The teaching of choral singing based on the genuine poetry of the people (folk songs) and the teaching of decorative art based on examples of indigenous popular art will hold a first place.

The Council will consist of:
a representative of each commune;
two representatives of secondary schools;
two, of technical and professional schools;
two, of institutions of higher education (to be elected by professors and students);
two, by the Schools of Music;
two, by the School of Decorative Art.

LIV

Schools, well lighted and ventilated, must not have on their walls any emblems of religion or of political parties.

The public schools welcome the followers of every religious profession, the believers in every creed and those, too, who are able to live without an altar and without a God.

Liberty of conscience receives entire respect. Each one may offer up his silent prayers.

But there will be inscribed on the walls inspiring words that, like an heroic symphony, will never lose their power to raise and animate the soul.

And there will be representations of those masterpieces of the painter's art which interpret most nobly the endless longings and aspirations of mankind.

Reforms of the Constitutions.

LV

Every seven years the Great National Council will meet in a special conference to consider constitutional reforms.

But the Constitution can be altered at any time, when a third of the citizen electors make a request for the alteration.

The following bodies have the right to propose amendments of the Constitution;
the members of the National Council;
the representatives of the communes;
the Court of Administration;
the Corporations.

The Right of Initiative.

LVI

All citizens belonging to electoral bodies have the right of initiating legislative proposals with regard to questions which fall within the sphere of action of one or other Council;

But the initiative will not take effect unless at least one-fourth of the electors of the Council in question are unanimous in moving and supporting it.

The Power of Appeal.

LVII

All laws that have received the sanction of the two legislative bodies may be subjected to public reconsideration with the possibility of repeal provided that such reconsideration be asked for by a number of electors equal to at least a fourth of the enfranchised citizens.

The Right of Petition.

LVIII

All citizens have the right of petition towards those bodies which they have helped to elect.

Reduplication of Offices.

LIX

No citizen may fill more than one official post nor take part in two legislative bodies at the same time.

Recall,

LX

Any official appointment may be revoked

when the official in question loses his political rights through a sentence confirmed by the Court of Law,

when the decree of revocation is voted for by more than half of the members of the electoral body.

Responsibility.

LXI

All holders of power and all public officials of the province are legally responsible for any injury caused to State, commune, Corporation, or single citizen by any transgression of theirs, whether through misdoing, carelessness, cowardice, or inaccuracy.

Remuneration.

LXII

All public officials, enumerated in the Statutes and appointed in the new Constitution, will receive suitable remuneration, in accordance with the decision of the National Council annually revised.

The Aediles.

LXIII

There will be in the province a College of Aediles, wisely selected from men of taste, skill, and a liberal education.

This "College" will be a revival not so much of the Roman Aediles, as of the "Office for the adornment of the City" which, in our fourteenth century, arranged a new road or a new piazza with the same sense of rhythm and proportion which guided them in the conduct of a Republican triumph or a carnival display.

It will provide for the decorum of life;

secure the safety, decency, sanitation of public edifices, and private dwellings;

prevent the disfigurement of roads by awkward or ill-placed buildings;

enliven civic festivals by sea and land with graceful ornament, recalling our forefathers for whom the glory of the sunshine and a few fair garlands of flowers with human beauty of pageant and motion sufficed to frame a miracle of joy;

convince the workers that to add beauty, some sign of joy in the building, to the humblest habitation is an act of piety, that a sense of religion, of human mystery, of the profundity of Nature may be passed on from generation to generation in the simplest symbol, carved or painted on the kneading trough or the cradle, on the loom or the distaff, on the linen chest or the cottage beam;

it will try to reawaken in our people the love of beautiful line and colour in the things that are used in their daily life, showing them how much, in the old days, could be achieved by a slight geometrical design, by a star, a flower, a heart, a serpent or a dove on a pitcher or oil jar or jug, on a bench or chest or platter;

it will serve to show our people how the ancient spirit of communal liberty manifested itself even in the utensils that received the imprint of man's life;

finally, convinced that a people cannot attain to strength and nobility without noble architecture it will endeavour to make

modern architects realize that the new materials—iron and glass and concrete—must be raised to the level of harmonious life by the invention of a new architecture.

Music.

LXIV

In the Italian province of Carnaro, music is a social and religious institution.

Once in a thousand or two thousand years music springs from the soul of a people and flows on for ever.

A noble race is not one that creates a God in its own image but one that creates also the song wherewith to do Him homage.

Every rebirth of a noble race is a lyric force, every sentiment that is common to the whole race, a potential lyric; music, the language of ritual, has power, above all else, to exalt the achievement and the life of man.

Does it not seem that great music has power to bring spiritual peace to the strained and anxious multitude?

The reign of the human spirit is not yet.

"When matter acting on matter shall be able to replace man's physical strength, then will the spirit of man begin to see the dawn of liberty": so said a man of Dalmatia of our own Adriatic, the blind seer of Sebenico.

As cock-crow heralds the dawn, so music is the herald of the soul's awakening.

Meanwhile, in the instruments of labour, of profit, and of sport, in the noisy machines which, even they, fall into a poetical rhythm, music can find her motives and her harmonies.

In the pauses of music is heard the silence of the tenth corporation.

LXV

In every commune of the province there will be a choral society and an orchestra subsidized by the State.

In the city of Fiume, the College of Aediles will be commissioned to erect a great concert hall, accommodating an audience of at least ten thousand with tiers of seats and ample space for choir and orchestra.

The great orchestral and choral celebrations will be entirely free—in the language of the Church—a gift of God.

Statutum et Ordinatum Est.
Juro Ego.

APPENDIX II

THE PROGRAMME (DECEMBER 1921) OF THE NATIONAL FASCIST PARTY

FASCISM has constituted itself a political party in order to stiffen its discipline and define its "creed."

The Nation is not merely the sum of the inhabitants of the country, nor is it merely an instrument of the parties within it, for carrying out their purposes, but an organism embracing an indefinite series of generations in which each individual is but a transient element; and the supreme synthesis of all the possessions of the race, material and immaterial.

The State is the legal embodiment of the Nation. Political institutions serve their purpose in so far as they afford expression and guardianship of all that is of value to the Nation.

The private interests of the individual and the interests of several individuals organized collectively as a group (family, commune, Corporation, etc.) are promoted and defended, always as forming part of the interests of the Nation, to which they are subordinate.

The National Fascist Party affirms that during the present historical period the prevailing form of social organization in the world is national Society and that the essential law of world-life is not the unification of various societies into a single immense Society "Humanity" according to the Internationalist creed, but a fruitful and, we may hope, peaceful co-operation between Nations.

THE STATE.

The State is to be reduced to those functions which are essential, the political and judicial.

The State should confer powers and responsibilities on certain associations. It should entrust to the professional and economic Corporations the right of electing the members of the National Technical Councils.

It follows that the powers and the functions actually exercised by Parliament must be limited.

To the sphere of Parliament belong questions regarding the individual as a citizen of the State, and regarding the State as the guardian of supreme national interests; to the sphere of the National Technical Councils belong questions referring to the various activities of individuals as producers.

The State is sovereign: and such sovereignty cannot and should not be interfered with or diminished by the Church, to which must be guaranteed the most complete liberty in the exercise of her spiritual ministry.

The National Fascist Party, in its attitude towards various forms of political institutions, has in view above all the moral and material interests of the Nation, as it exists to-day and will exist in the future.

The Corporations.

Fascism cannot fail to recognize, as an historical fact, the development of the Corporations: its desire is to co-ordinate that development to national ends.

The Corporations are to be encouraged in view of two fundamental objects: as an expression of national solidarity and as a means of developing production.

The Corporations must not tend to exclude individual action, levelling arbitrarily the capacities and functions of private persons, but rather further and develop them.

The National Fascist Party proposes to bring forward the following demands for Labour and the Salariate:

1. The passing of a law to confirm a "legal" average eight-hour day for all salaried persons, allowing for occasional exceptions, in cases of agricultural or industrial necessity.

2. Social legislation to provide for ordinary needs—especially with regard to accidents, sickness, and old age of workers—agricultural, industrial, managerial, always providing that there shall be no interference with production.

3. Representation of the workers of every industry in the management in so far as it is concerned with the employees.

4. Assignment to Labour organizations whenever they are trustworthy and technically well-equipped of the conduct of industries and public services.

5. The diffusion of small holdings in all districts where agricultural and other conditions render them suitable and likely to be productive.

Precepts of Home Politics.

The National Fascist Party means to raise political practice to a higher level so that the standard of public and private morality shall be no longer antithetic to national life.

It aspires to the highest honour that can accrue to any Government of the Country; that of re-establishing the ideal of administering public affairs, not in the interest of cliques or parties but in the supreme interest of the Nation.

The prestige of the Nation-State must be restored; the State, that is to say, far from being an indifferent onlooker at the unchaining of hostile forces that threaten its authority or its administration—must be the jealous guardian and defender of the national tradition and the national will.

Personal liberty has a two-fold limit; the liberty of other individuals or legally recognized bodies and the sovereign right of the Nation itself to life and development.

The State must promote in every way the development of the Nation, not merely by State action, but by encouraging every movement which aims at the progress of the community, whether religious, ethical, intellectual, artistic, legal, social, economic, or physiological.

Precepts of Foreign Politics.

Let Italy declare once more her right to complete unity, historical and geographic even in cases where that right has not yet been attained; let her fulfil her function as bulwark of Latin culture in the Mediterranean; let her realize a strong and stable government under her rule for the peoples of different nationalities that are annexed to Italy; let her give safe guardianship and the right of political representation to Italians in foreign countries

Fascism does not believe in the vitality and in the principles that inspire the so-called League of Nations, inasmuch as not all the Nations are represented in it and those that are represented do not find themselves on a footing of equality.

Fascism does not believe in the vitality and usefulness of the various Internationals, red, white, or of any other colour, because they are artificial and formal structures, for they include only minorities, more or less convinced, as against vast masses of the population, whose life has an independent course of its own, where organic and vital changes take place before which international arrangements and arguments must fall to the ground, as recent experience bears witness.

International commercial treaties must be revised and—in so far as they have proved themselves in practice inapplicable—

modified, in harmony with national and international economic conditions and necessities.

The State ought to increase the value of her Italian colonies in the Mediterranean and in the further ocean by economic and cultural improvements and big increase of communication and transport.

The National Fascist Party declares itself in favour of a policy of friendly relations with all the peoples of the Orient, both near and distant.

The external defence and development of Italy should be entrusted to an army and navy adequate to her political requirements and proportionate to those of other Nations; and to diplomatic representatives who understand their duties and are well-equipped to perform them, so that Italy may take her due position in the world.

POLITICAL FINANCE AND ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION.

The National Fascist Party will provide:

1. That the responsibility of individuals and of Corporations, in the case of labour agreements, freely undertaken, that have not been fulfilled, shall be confirmed.

2. That the civil responsibility of members of public administrative bodies and of the administrators for any negligence, towards those who have suffered from it, shall be confirmed and regulated.

3. That all liability to taxation and all successive assessments shall be made publicly, so that control may be exercised over the financial obligations of every individual towards the State.

4. That the State intervention which may prove to be absolutely necessary for the protection of certain branches of industry, agriculture, and manufacture, against dangerous foreign competition, shall be such as will stimulate productive energy in the country but not such as to encourage parasitic exploitation of the national economy by trusts or profiteers.

The following will be the immediate objects of the National Fascist Party:

1. *To restore the Finance of the State and the public authorities to a sound condition,* by means of rigorously restricting all needless or wasteful expenditure not absolutely necessary for public welfare and general order.

2. *To decentralize administration in order to simplify the public services and disperse the bureaucracy,* while maintaining a firm resistance to any political Regionalism.

3. *To exercise the most rigid guardianship of the taxpayers' money* putting a stop to any favours or subsidies to any associations, Co-operatives or industries unable to stand by themselves, unless they are indispensable to the Nation, or to any private persons, either from the State or from any local authority.

4. *To simplify the system of taxation* and to levy taxes, in due proportion, without partisanship for or against this or that class of citizen and not according to any scheme of progressive spoliation.

5. *To oppose demagogic taxation and finance* which discourages initiative and cuts off saving and production at the source.

6. To stop the policy of public works hurriedly undertaken for electoral reasons though professedly for the sake of public order.

7. To form a settled scheme of public works according to modern economic needs—technical, military and national—a scheme which will deal chiefly with

(*a*) the completing and reorganizing of Italian railways, making a better connection between those of outlying districts with the lines of the peninsula, not only for internal communication with the peninsula itself but, especially, with the longitudinal lines from south to north, across the Apennines;

(*b*) accelerating to the very utmost, the electrification of railways and, in general, making all possible use of water power by a systematic exploitation of the watershed for purposes of industry and agriculture;

(*c*) systematizing and extending the net-work of roads, especially in the south where the need for this is a serious hindrance to the solution of innumerable social and economic problems;

(*d*) improving the maritime communication of the peninsula with the islands, the eastern coast of the Adriatic, and our Mediterranean colonies, and also that between the north and south of the peninsula itself, both as an auxiliary to the railway system and also as an encouragement to Italian navigation;

(*e*) concentrating expenditure and effort in a few ports on the three seas, and bestowing on those few a complete modern equipment;

(*f*) opposing and resisting all favouritism of special localities especially with reference to public works, which is apt to cause dispersion of force and is an obstacle to big undertakings in the national interest.

8. *To restore to private enterprise those industrial undertakings which have proved unsuitable for State management;* especially telephones and railways (while encouraging joint action between the great local lines which may be run in different methods).

9. *To renounce the monopoly in posts and telegraphs* so that private initiative may eventually supersede State service.

PRECEPTS OF SOCIAL POLICY.

The State recognizes the social function of private property which is at the same time a right and a duty. It is the form of administration which has been assigned throughout historical times to the individual by Society for the increment of the wealth of the community.

The National Fascist Party with regard to projects of Socialist reconstruction on an exclusively Collectivist basis, takes its stand on the ground of historical and national facts which do not point to any single type of economy in agriculture or industry, and declares itself to be in favour of those forms—whether individualist or of any other type—which guarantee the largest production and the greatest prosperity.

The National Fascist Party stands for a regime that encourages initiative and individual energy (the strongest operative factor in economic production), favours the increase of national wealth, and sets itself resolutely against the whole farrago of expensive and anti-economic schemes in favour of Socialism and municipalization, etc. The National Fascist Party will support any kind of initiative that tends to improve the system of production, and intends to eliminate every kind of parasitism both of class and of individual.

The National Fascist Party will provide:

(*a*) That all the quarrels and differences still going on between classes and categories shall be brought under control, and therefore decrees: legal recognition of Labour and Employers' organizations and of their consequent responsibility;

(*b*) that the prevention of strikes in the public services shall be maintained at all times and places by the institution of arbitration tribunals composed of representatives of the Government, of the workers, and employers, who are in conflict, and of the public that has to pay.

EDUCATIONAL POLICY.

The aim of the school should be to train persons capable of ensuring the economic and political progress of the Nation; of raising the moral and intellectual level of the workers and of providing for the constant renewal of the governing class by developing the best elements in all classes.

The following provisions have this aim in view:

1. *A more vigorous attempt to put an end to illiteracy*, constructing schools accessible to the people and making State provision for all necessary equipment of every kind.

2. *Extension of compulsory instruction up to and including Class VI* in elementary schools, in those communes able to provide the necessary schools and for all those who are not able to provide secondary schools; compulsory instruction up to, and including, Class IV, in all other communes.

3. *The introduction of National sentiment* into elementary schools, so as to make them suitable for the moral and physical training of Italian soldiers; for this end there must be rigid State control over the code of instruction, the choice of teachers, and their teaching; especially in those communes that are under the control of anti-national parties.

4. *Secondary schools* and universities free, except for the control of the State over their programme of studies and the spirit of their teaching, and the State provision of preparatory military instruction, for the training of officers.

5. *Training schools* on the same lines as those already stated with regard to the schools where the future teachers will be employed, of a rigorously national character.

6. *Professional, industrial, and agricultural schools*, so arranged as to make full use of the contributions of money and of experience from business men and agriculturalists, with a view to improving the productive capacity of the Nation and of creating a middle class of skilled technicians and managers. To this end the State should co-ordinate the efforts of private initiative and should supply any gaps that occur.

7. *Secondary schools, higher and lower to be mainly classical*; reform and unification of the lower secondary schools in the direction of teaching Latin to all the students so that French may no longer be the only language besides Italian; the second language to be selected instead according to the requirements of the particular district in question, especially in the case of frontier provinces.

8. *Unification of all scholarships and bursaries* of every kind and description in an institute under Government control and management, which will select the most willing and intelligent pupils from the elementary schools and secure for them higher instruction, protecting them, where necessary, from the selfishness of their parents and providing them with a maintenance grant when it is needed.

9. *Salary and status for teachers, professors, and officers of the army giving military instruction* such as to secure for them a

suitable social position and the means of self-culture so as to inspire them and also the *public* with a sense of the national importance of their work.

JUSTICE.

Preventive and therapeutic methods of dealing with crime must be increased and developed—reformatories, schools for refractory children, criminal lunatic asylums. Punishment, as a means of defending the Society of the Nation from legal injury, must be deterrent; the system of penitentiaries aims at a function of social and hygienic amelioration (a development of prison labour).

The system of special magistrates must be abolished. The National Fascist Party is in favour of a revision of the military penal code.

Procedure should be made more rapid.

NATIONAL DEFENCE.

Military service is compulsory on every citizen. The army should set before itself the ideal of an armed Nation in which every kind of strength, individual and collective, economic, industrial, and agricultural, shall work together for one supreme purpose: the defence of national interests.

To this end the National Fascist Party stands for the immediate organization of an army complete and fully trained which would, in the first place, guard the conquered frontier, and, in the second place, hold in readiness, throughout the country, trained and marshalled, the men and the means of defence which the Nation would need in the hour of danger or of glory.

To the same end the army, in conjunction with the schools and with clubs organized for sport, ought to train our citizens for combat and for patriotism (pre-military instruction).

ORGANIZATION.

Fascism in being is a political, economic, and military organization.

On the political side, it welcomes without any narrow partisanship all those who are willing to subscribe to its principles and obey its decrees; it values and encourages all kinds of ability, organizing its adherents in accordance with their tastes and capacities; it takes an active part in every manifestation of political life, always carrying its teaching into practice as far as possible and reaffirming entire body of doctrine.

On the economic side, it promotes the formation of professional corporations whether or not they are definitely Fascist in name, according to the necessities of time and place.

On the military side, the National Fascist Party is one with its forces; a voluntary militia for the service of the national State, a living force in which the Fascist idea is embodied.

APPENDIX III

EXTRACT FROM THE STATUTES OF THE CONFEDERATION OF CORPORATIONS

CONSTITUTION.

Article 1.—Under the title of "National Confederation of Corporations" an association, uniting, under the symbol of the Italian flag, citizens of both sexes and every religious denomination, and belonging to all classes and types of intellectual and manual labour, is being formed throughout the territory under the rule of the Italian State.

Article 2.—The Confederation is formed:

(*a*) from the Corporations representing the Union of the various trades, arts, or professions, related to or dependent on the same kind of labour or industry. These Corporations are seven in number, as follows:

(1) Agriculture;
(2) Industry;
(3) Commerce;
(4) Transport and communication;
(5) Public and private employees;
(6) Liberal professions;
(7) Art;

(*b*) from the national Trade Unions, with their provincial and communal branches, which represent respectively a single kind of trade, art, or profession. The national Trade Unions belonging to the same type of industrial or intellectual activity are to form a Corporation;

(*c*) from the Trade Unions which, owing to the special kind of labour which they represent, or for other reasons, do not or cannot form part of a Corporation;

(*d*) from the communal or provincial Trade Unions having no national Trade Union.

Article 3.—Every category of trade, art, or profession is distinct in class, according to whether it deals with direct capitalist producers, managers, Co-operatives, *compartecipanti* (agriculturalists who share in the produce), professional workers, employees, or salaried workers; so that the organization of each category ought also to be divided into different organizations of class.

Those who do not directly contribute, either manually or intellectually, to productive economic life and to the development of labour, cannot take part in the Confederation.

Article 4.—The Confederation—considered as an organization for co-ordinating the various corporate activities of category and class—explains its policy in all the provinces of the territory under the rule of the Italian State by means of its own institutions, directly dependent on it, and styled *Federations of the National Trade Unions.*

Programme.

Article 5.—The Confederation, maintaining that the re-arrangement of Society on a Trade Union basis should be developed by representing all categories and classes, establishing among them a network of relationships, economic and juridical, for the purpose of determining and defining their respective social functions, declares that Trade Unionism is no longer the specific institutional feature belonging solely to the "Labour" class, but, owing to the impulse originating from Labour and passed on to all other classes, has become the institutional feature of the entire population and, as such, is incorporated in, and identified with, the Nation, as the supreme synthesis of the entire spiritual and material values of the race.

The Confederation declares that the interest or duty common to all categories and classes consists in labour and in intensive and progressive production, adjusted to the growth of national requirements; and in the fight against parasitism, waste of wealth, and extravagance on a large scale; since Trade Unionism expresses the needs of a Society in which problems of production and cultivation hold the first place, submitting all organized productive forces to the direction of science and expert knowledge.

The Confederation declares that the development of production presupposes and implies the growth of Capital, to be invested continually in new or more perfect forms of Labour; a growth which ought not to result from a curtailment of wages, so long as the latter are in accordance with industrial conditions and general cost of living.

The Confederation declares that the increase of production and means of production implies, not only the increase of the

productive types, but at the same time the increase of the middle classes and an evergrowing diffusion of wealth and property; which also means that it will afford to the proletarian *élites* the possibility of acquiring and directly managing the instruments and materials of production, and of rendering themselves indispensable both socially and technically.

The Confederation admits all forms or systems of production and labour, provided that they represent the result of technical and administrative capability and foresight indispensable to the success of all undertakings, and that they are on a basis of free competition without illicit intervention and interference on the part of any State organizations.

The Confederation declares that all classes are necessary, since each corresponds to a function forming one of that series of tasks indispensable for the due organization of labour and of production—for classes become more numerous as social functions become more numerous in an economic regime directed towards constantly increasing productivity—so that progressive economic evolution can never lead to the abolition of classes because it would mean the retrogression or arrest of social functions in the field of labour.

The Confederation declares that the dynamic law of civil history does not consist in the struggle between classes, which means war among social functions, and still less in collaboration of classes, which means confusion; but rather in the *Struggle of Capabilities* which means the struggle of the masses of the lower classes who have become capable of fulfilling the tasks of the upper classes, against the upper class masses who have lost the capabilities corresponding to the tasks of their own class.

The Confederation declares that the specific principle of Trade Unionism, expressed by the formula of *Struggle of Capabilities*, does not permit that the organization of citizens in classes or categories should destroy the actual functions of those whom they represent, therefore it does not permit those general strikes which affect entire classes and categories and every one of them in any part of the realm.

The principle of the *Struggle of Capabilities* implies that a sectional struggle may eventually avail itself of the right to strike, but only when a strike can be localized and limited by being directed against those groups which, in the interest of labour and national production, must be eliminated; otherwise the fight, being impossible in the economic field, will have to be transferred to the political field, as in the case of people employed in public services.

Aims.

Article 6.—The Confederation proposes to assist workers to outgrow gradually their position as apprentices and wage-earners by developing their technical and administrative capabilities essential to the management of the means of production, so as to enable them to attain a state of independence and well-being, as holders of property, individual or associated, and engaged usefully in administering it.

Article 7.—The Confederation further proposes:

(*a*) to obtain work for the unemployed, considering unemployment as a problem to be solved by technical measures or by organized and protected emigration;

(*b*) to ensure a decent existence for workers by means of labour agreements which shall periodically fix a minimum wage or stipend and a working-day;

(*c*) to help workers in all questions likely to arise between them and their employers;

(*d*) to promote the development and enforce the application of laws concerning labour and insurance;

(*e*) to afford technical and general instruction to workers by means of lectures, professional schools, etc.;

(*f*) to promote the formation of Co-operatives and undertakings on an industrial or agricultural share-basis, when these seem to be measures tending to the real improvement of production and consumption, and experimental schools for directive ability.

Article 8.—The Confederation is responsible for guarding interests of the small direct producers, *mezzadri*, small farmers, small tenants, small artisan manufacturers, in so far as these interests are justified by a social utility resulting from the intensification and specialization of industrial and agricultural production, provided that free play is still left for wage-earners in those undertakings where they can be suitably employed.

Article 9.—The Confederation, considering property not as the absolute dominion of persons over things, but as a social function, intends to regulate its intimate relations between Trade Unions of workers and employers by means of intermediary organs formed of competent committees, who shall have full power as arbitrators, in cases when questions cannot be settled by direct means.

Article 10.—The Confederation, with regard to the professional associations existing outside the national Trade Union Movement, reserves to itself the right of taking such action as may be determined on, in view of the programmes and spirit of the directors and the amount of control the associations themselves have over their own members.

Article 11.—The Confederation, with regard to labour contracts, does not recognize conditions of work not contracted through Trade Unions but imposed on workers by employers or vice versa; nor monopolistic clauses in contracts, nor those putting unfair limitations on the free play of the directive activity of managements.

Article 12.—The Confederation, in order to develop national feeling and sense of duty in citizens, proposes to undertake not only propaganda work, but also political action tending to give organized categories a direct representation in the actual body of the State, with legislative privileges, so that they may acquire a realization of large general interests, which include all categories, and of the supreme national necessity which embraces all classes.

Article 13.—The Confederation, since it intends to act in the sphere of national interests and ideals, must not only combat all tendencies and political measures of an anti-national nature, but also support all national political measures that reinforce it, reserving, however, its autonomy of action in dealing with economic problems.

FUNCTIONS.

Article 14.—The specific functions of the Confederation, as the directing organ of all the organized categories and classes composing it, are the following:

(*a*) Propaganda of the fundamental principles of national Trade Unionism contained in these statutes.

(*b*) Reconciliation of the interests of the different categories; especially in bringing industry and agriculture into touch with one another.

(*c*) Solution of questions likely to arise eventually between the various Trade Unions belonging to it.

(*d*) Solution of labour problems on a basis of statistics compiled by the secretaries of the various organizations.

(*e*) Constitution of new Trade Unions and control over their constitutional and working methods.

(*f*) Representation of labour interests in treating with Government authorities.

(*g*) Supervision of agitations that may be necessary for the defence of labour's legitimate interests and for the revindication of rights which have been trampled upon.

(*h*) Support of the new Trade Unions in national legislation and the consultative offices of the State.

COMMUNAL TRADE UNIONS.

All Trade Unions in Italian territory can join in the Confederation, provided that they formally accept the customs, statutes, and decisions of the said Confederation.

In order to be held valid by the Confederation, the Constitut of the Trade Unions must be based on the following lines:

Each Trade Union must be formed of persons exercising · same trade, art, or profession. The superior personale direct them, technically or otherwise, must be formed into a separ Trade Union. Members of parties of an anti-national charac must give secure proof of their attachment to the principle the Confederation.

The autonomy of the Trade Union must not extend beyond · sphere of the interests of the actual category of workers ir definite commune.

The various Trade Unions formed within the bounds of cc munal territory are placed under the supervision and direct of a general secretary nominated by the secretariate of the P vincial Federation of National Trade Unions for the purpose co-ordinating the actions of the local Trade Unions, allowing, h(ever, to each Trade Union the essential autonomy of dealing w everything concerning the interest of each separate category trade, art, or profession, and also concerning the interests of e: organized class.

Provincial Trade Unions.

When the number of Trade Unions of the same trade, art, profession, existing in a province, shall have become of suffici importance to represent the general interests of a definite ca gory, then these Trade Unions should be joined into a provin(organization called the Provincial Trade Union, to which the lc Trade Unions are obliged to affiliate.

The Provincial Trade Unions have the right of maintain autonomy of action in the sphere of their respective econo) categories, and of the respective interests of classes, on the b: of their own statutes and rules, which must not clash with general principles, theory, and discipline of the Confederation Corporations.

The chief task of the provincial Trade Unions is to co-ordin and discipline the action of the Trade Unions belonging to the sa economic category, in the sphere of the province; also the ɪ vincial Trade Unions must supervise the constitution and worki of new Trade Unions; decide questions which may eventu: arise between various Trade Unions of the same category : study labour problems concerning the same branch of trade, : or profession, carrying out the decisions of the General Cou in full accord with the superior organizations, i.e. with Corporations.

Corporations.

The Corporation is a national organization consisting of the combination of various provincial Trade Unions interested in the same kind of labour and industry. Thus, for example, the Corporation of Agriculture embraces all the provincial Trade Unions of *braccianti* and *mezzadri*. Trade Unions of small tenants and farmers, and not merely the provincial Trade Unions of technical agriculturalists; while the Corporation of Industry embraces all the provincial Trade Unions of builders, metal-workers, chemists, etc.

The organs of the Corporations are:

(*a*) *The Corporative Council* composed of representatives nominated by the various provincial Trade Unions forming the Corporation, in the proportion of one for each provincial Trade Union.

(*b*) *The Directorate* composed of as many representatives as there are types of trades, arts, or professions interested in the great branch of industry or labour represented by the Corporation.

(*c*) *The Secretariate*, which will be elected by the Directorate.

The principal task of the Corporations is to co-ordinate and discipline the conduct of the provincial Trade Unions of trade, art, or profession interested in the same kind of labour or industry, with the object of preventing the special interests of the category from injuring the superior interest of national labour and industry, in their great branches of activity.

The secretaries of the Corporations form the directorate of the Confederation.

Federations.

The Provincial Federation is an executive organ acting in direct dependence on the Confederation for the practical application of the resolutions passed by the latter. In the matter of this practical application, which must agree with the varying provincial conditions, the secretary of the Provincial Federation must work in accordance with the craft organizations of the province. The directors of the Provincial Federation are to be nominated by the Confederation, with the approbation of the directors of the provincial craft organizations (i.e. organizations of categories).

The essential task of the Provincial Federation is:

(*a*) to co-ordinate the interests of the various organized categories and reconcile the legitimate interests of the various organized classes on the fundamental lines of action fixed by the decisions and general principles of the Confederation itself;

(*b*) to propagate the principles of national Trade Unionism, to form new Trade Unions and exercise vigilant control over their constitutional and working methods.

To develop its own action the secretariate of the Provincial Federations takes upon itself the following duties, which are to be carried out by special offices, that is to say:

(1) *Office of Conciliation and Arbitration*, which aims at studying the procedure of labour disputes and contracts, adjudicating in disputes between Capital and Labour and the pacification of dissensions between the various Trade Unions of different trades, arts, or professions (not only dissensions among Trade Unions of the same category), and between Trade Unions and their members.

(2) *Office of Propaganda*, which aims at the spreading abroad of national Trade Union principles, by means of lectures, various publications, and especially by an ever wider and more systematic distribution of the official organ of the Confederation. The task of this office is to popularize technical and scientific knowledge regarding the various branches of trade, art, and profession; to study from a technical point of view social problems and those measures that can have a practical and immediate application; and to develop in producers class-consciousness, by increasing general instruction likely to define the idea of the social function of every class, with the rights and duties pertaining to them in the field of national production.

(3) *Office of Juridico-Legal Consultation*. The task of this office is to study the Labour question from the juridical point of view and to help members in questions arising from the inadequate administration of social laws or from their faulty interpretation.

(4) *Office of Statistics* aims at collecting from each province all data concerning the economic and social conditions of categories and classes and particularly information of a technical nature regarding methods of production and labour. This office should work not only systematically but with the greatest possible care and should therefore be organized by means of a special service under the charge of the general secretaries of the local Trade Unions and the secretaries of the provincial Trade Unions.

(5) *Office of Administration*, which has the task of administering the fund formed by contributions from members; the confederal treasury, which has the right of exercising control over this office. At the end of the year this office must submit accounts of expenditure and receipt for the past year and estimates for the coming year to the Confederation. On the other hand the office shall have the right of exercising control over the administrations of the Trade Unions of the province.

INDEX

Printed in Great Britain by

UNWIN BROTHERS, LIMITED

LONDON AND WOKING

Edited by FS, 2020